

**CITY OF NORWALK
BOARD OF EDUCATION FINANCE COMMITTEE
REGULAR MEETING
JUNE 10, 2015**

ATTENDANCE: Rosa Murray, Chair; Brian Meek

STAFF: Richard Rudl, BOE CFO; Interim Superintendent James Connelly, Brenda Wilcox William, Communications Officer; Dr. Lynne Moore, West Rocks Middle School Principal

CALL TO ORDER.

Ms. Murray called the meeting to order at 6:06 p.m. A quorum was not present.

RECOMMENDED RECONCILED 2015-2016 OPERATING BUDGET.

Ms. Murray stated that because there was no quorum, this would be an informational meeting.

Interim Superintendent Connelly said if a quorum had been present, the Committee would have been requested to approve the budget as reconciled so it could be brought before the full Board at the next meeting. He also reminded everyone that the budget had been created in October or November of 2014 before the issues with Special Education came up or all the revenues that will be generated. He said that the District was in a good situation and that the City had allocated the Board's full budget request. This means that the District is in a good place. He commended Mr. Rudl on his excellent work.

Interim Superintendent Connelly said one of the Board's goals is the establishment of governance councils in all the schools. He explained that he had believed that there was an appropriation for this in the 2015-16 budget because it was in the 2014-15 budget. However, this was not the case and Interim Superintendent Connelly said there would be a recommendation this being included later in the meeting. There are not many changes in the budget. The biggest change is in Special Education.

Mr. Rudl then narrated a PowerPoint presentation highlighting the major changes in the budget in the following areas:

- Anthem Health Insurance Renewal in March 2015
- Special Education Transfers during the FY 14/15 Budget
- Increase Medicare Revenue Re-imbursement
- Transportation Contract Savings
- Degree Level Changes after December 2014
- Norwalk Early Childhood Center Start Date moved to August 2016

- \$100 Athletic Participation Fee

Regarding the insurance program, Mr. Meek asked what the percentage of the work force insurance policies were single plans versus family plans. He expressed concern about the impending Cadillac Tax. Mr. Rudl said that anything over \$27,000 for a family plan or an Employee Plus One plan would be affected. He reviewed the details and said that currently, the East and West Coast residents would be hit the hardest with this tax while those living in the South would be less affected. Discussion followed about the details. Mr. Rudl said that if the tax was in place today, the District would be okay.

Mr. Rudl went on to review areas where there were savings, such as transportation savings on the depot, severance payments, the decommissioning of the Rowayton portables, and changes in unemployment insurance, among others.

The additional expenses included those staff members who had degree level changes since the budget was created, high school staffing meetings, and athletic insurance. Mr. Rudl pointed out that the established of the previously mentioned school governance councils would also be included in this area and would cost \$20,000 for a total of \$490,860.

Mr. Meek asked about the \$75,000 cut to the Parents 4 Literacy & Standards Initiative. He asked if that was included School Governance. Mr. Rudl said that it did not.

Mr. Rudl then reviewed the changes to the Special Education Adjustments to the Budget as outlined in the PowerPoint presentation. He reminded everyone that when the District spends more than 4.5 multiples of the expenses of an average student, the District is reimbursed by the State. Last year, the District expected approximately 2.5 million in reimbursements, but received 2.6 million, which helped to reduce the overall costs. He reviewed the anticipated costs and reimbursements with the Committee members.

Mr. Rudl also reviewed the expected savings based on Out of District (OOD) students returning to the District. Ms. Murray wished to know how that decision is made. Mr. Rudl said that it was based on the IEPs. He added that some were coming back because of the new program at Rowayton and others were coming back into the District based on the progress they had made.

The proposed Budget Cuts were the next items that Mr. Rudl reviewed. He explained that there was additional savings of \$20,000 from the current vacancy for the Director of Labor Relations, which is not expected to be filled until October 1, 2015. There is a staff member filling the position.

The discussion moved to the Parents 4 Literacy, which had been a Title 1 program. Mr. Meek had several questions regarding this program. Mr. Meek said that the Board may want to see an Excel spreadsheet showing the variations. Interim Superintendent

Connelly said that the full Cabinet had considered the cut to the literacy program. Discussion followed.

Ms. Murray pointed out that the Board would receive the reconciled budget in advance and could contact the administration if they had specific questions or concerns about the proposed cuts before the full Board meeting.

Mr. Meek said that this was a very good budget. Interim Superintendent Connelly agreed and said that since the City approved the Superintendent's Proposed Budget as presented and there was nothing controversial in the budget, he felt the District was in a very good position.

Mr. Meek asked how the funding for the School Governance Committees would be allocated. Interim Superintendent Connelly reviewed the details. He said that there would be the allocation from the Board plus something from grants. Each school should get about \$5,000 per school. Discussion followed.

ADJOURNMENT

Ms. Murray adjourned the meeting at 6:40 p.m.

Respectfully submitted

S. L. Soltes
Telesco Secretarial Services