

Call to order: A regular meeting of the Shelton Board of Education Committee was held on Wednesday, June 21, 2017. The meeting convened at 5:05 p.m., Chairman Win Oppel presiding.

Roll Call:

Members in attendance: Chairman Win Oppel, Vice Chairman Arlene Liscinsky, Faith Hack, Mark Holden, Dr. Darlisa Ritter.

Excused Absence: David Gioiello, Tom Minotti.

Guest in attendance: Kate Kutash, Board of Education Member, Kathleen Yolish, Board of Education Member, Dominic Barone, Director of Finance, Christopher Clouet, Superintendent, Deborah Keller, SEA President, Judson Crawford, Shelton Senior Center Commission, Catharine Araujo, Finance Assistant.

The Pledge of Allegiance was recited.

Approval of Agenda:

Faith Hack MOVED to approve the agenda as presented, SECONDED by Dr. Darlisa Ritter. A vote was taken with all in favor. Motion carried.

Approval of Minutes: Regular Finance Committee Meeting of May 17, 2017.

Faith Hack MOVED to approve the minutes with the correction of adding an "e" to the name "Carol" for Carole PannoZZo, SECONDED by Dr. Darlisa Ritter. A vote was taken with all in favor. Motion carried.

Dominic Barone stated that we are projecting to have a remaining balance between \$30,000 and \$50,000 when all bills and invoices are processed. Some outstanding items are utilities, one month of tuition, one month of transportation, private transportation, and a final payroll. We have some accounts that have been over budget most of the year; primarily tuition and transportation. We are going to fund those deficits with the Excess Cost Grant from the State of Connecticut and also with savings from the health insurance. Mark Holden suggested pre buying some toner cartridges for the classrooms. Dominic Barone stated that the Heat and Utilities will probably come in a little under budget. We didn't get the savings that we thought we would get from the fuel cell this year, but we hope to improve that for future years. The parking lot funds will be moved next week into the non-classified salaries, 5112. The athletic account will have to be supplemented. In previous years we've had a balance in that account and every year we'd lose a little money and reduce the balance.

Approval of Year-to-Date Object Summary:

Faith Hack MOVED to approve the Year-to-Date Object Summary, (L2) for 2016-2017 School Year through May as presented, SECONDED by Arlene Liscinsky. A vote was taken with all in favor. Motion carried.

Approval of Check Register & A/P Cash Disbursements:

Dr. Darlisa Ritter MOVED to approve the Check Register & A/P Cash Disbursements Journal, SECONDED by Faith Hack. A vote was taken with all in favor. Motion carried.

Old Business:

- **Finance Update**

Cafeteria Update:

We've been on the RFP process which is primarily driven by the state. The committee that had been put together consists of Dominic Barone, John Skerritt, Catherine Araujo, and Kathleen Yolish. Due to the amount of work that was put in by the subcommittee, Kathleen Yolish suggested that there be a permanent subcommittee for the cafeteria who would meet maybe three times a year just in case the district ever wanted to go through this process again. Catherine Araujo stated that the process is driven by the USDA who directs their goals to the State of Connecticut, which in turn directs it to the local districts. The RFP itself and the basic contract are driven by the state. It comes in a document that we have very little to say or add to it and that's what we started with. We went out to bid through the City of Shelton. We had two bidder's conferences. We've been in close contact with Andy Paul in the State Department of Education to make sure that we are doing everything that we are supposed to be doing. We spoke to a number of references. We went to Staples High School and Bedford Middle School in Westport, and to Hamden to look at other programs and spoke to other business managers. We have tried to follow the state's process completely. There's a point system that we have to stick to. Dominic Barone stated that we talked to several communities that were using different providers. We also did site visits and went back to the bidders and asked for a best and final offer from each of the companies. We scored with the scoring rubric defined in the RFP and recommended Whitsons. We also had a dietician review the menus. Chairman Oppel asked if their proposal would require an increase in price for student meals. Dominic Barone stated that their projections will increase the participation, but not any student costs. Catherine Araujo stated that New Britain, Fairfield, Hamden, Crec, and East Haven all use Whitsons. Catherine Araujo stated that in the state's RFP it does state that anyone who bids is encouraged to keep the existing staff. In all of the responses the vendors agreed with the state's recommendation. Kathleen Yolish stated that Whitsons considered the cost of living and benefits for the workers. Catherine Araujo stated that Whitsons knows that the employee contract will be ending so in their response they took into account what the typical increase is and included that in their proposal. Dominic Barone requested that the Finance Committee gives the subcommittee permission to negotiate with Whitsons. Then the subcommittee would prepare a draft contract that would be sent to get approval from the State of Connecticut first.

Mark Holden MOVED to recommend to the full board the recommendation of the subcommittee in regards to the cafeteria contract, also to empower the Superintendent and his designees to work on a contract that will be submitted to the state, SECONDED by Dr. Darlisa Ritter. A vote was taken with all in favor. Motion carried.

Catherine Araujo stated that if the subcommittee starts working with Whitsons immediately they could give them a draft contract, which they promised to turn around quickly. Every year we lose money in our contract with Sodexo and with Whitsons we can hope to break even. This may take a year or two, but Whitsons has offered us a subsidy better than the other vendors. Whitsons has also agreed to match the labor list that we currently have. If we want a presentation at the next board meeting, Whitsons would attend.

Transportation:

Dominic Barone stated that we went out to bid on our private transportation. (Handout of the bid analysis was given. Bid responses being separated by each individual roundtrip.) Dominic Barone recommended that we go with the vendor with the lowest cost for each trip. We already use three of the four vendors. American Chair Services is the fourth vendor that we haven't used before. We will do a reference check before using them as a vendor. Chairman Oppel asked if we tried to bundle some of the trips to negotiate a better deal. Dominic Barone stated that we could try negotiating a better deal. Faith Hack asked if we've looked into partnering with other towns. Dominic Barone replied that it takes a lot of coordination. At this point we are looking at reducing these costs by at least \$100,000. We have also been looking at doing some of these trips ourselves. Chairman Oppel stated that we should be able pay a little less for transportation and we should not award contracts until these costs are revisited. .

Mark Holden MOVED to recommend to the full board the awarding of the contracts for in and out of district Special Education transportation subject to further negotiations with the bidders and also a review of potential in district transportation options, SECONDED by Dr. Darlisa Ritter. A vote was taken with all in favor. Motion carried.

Report on Facilities Projects:

Dominic Barone stated that work is being done at the High School and will start at Sunnyside the week of June 26. Kate Kutash asked if the new pipes being put in at the High School would be painted. Dominic Barone replied that he believed that anything exposed is supposed to be painted. The STEAM lab at the High School is progressing. Dominic Barone stated that he has spoken with the state and they are reviewing the application that we sent out for the ESS windows. We are at least a year out from getting them done.

New Business:

- **Operating Budget- possible adoption**

(Review of the Handout: Shelton Board of Education Budget Revision for School Year 2017-2018.)

Chairman Oppel stated that the first adjustment was to the Certified Teacher Salaries, reducing it by \$242,423 to \$33,231,964. Superintendent Clouet stated that we should be able to do this without any layoffs. Dominic Barone stated the second adjustment was to Athletics, reducing the amount of Athletic Stipends, Athletic Officials, and Athletic Transportation for a savings of almost \$50,000. Chairman Oppel stated that the next adjustment was to reduce 6 tuition interns and to add 4 building substitutes. The interns that are completing their time will be allowed to stay, but there will be no new interns starting in September. \$88,513 was added to Pension/Retirement/Post-Employment Benefits to make it \$988,513. \$45,000 was added to Unemployment Compensation to make it \$120,000. \$200,000 was reduced in our Worker's Compensation line to bring it to \$300,000. Teaching Supplies will be reduced by \$75,000 to \$175,000 by reducing consumption. The City has taken workbooks and textbooks into their budget. Library Books will be reduced by \$20,000 to \$28,600 by reducing consumption. Program Improvement and Staff Development will be reduced by \$50,000 to \$150,000 by reducing consumption. Conference and Travel will be reduced by \$5,000 to 25,000. \$100,000 will be saved in Special Education Transportation by getting lower prices from vendors through the RFP process. The new budget allocation will be \$1,446,000. \$25,000 will be saved from the current budget of \$46,695 for Student

Field Trips by taking fewer trips. We are assuming that the City is taking expenses over \$120,000 for our School Bus Fuel. We will save \$10,000 with our Wide Area Network, assuming that there won't be an increase leaving the new budget at \$107,000. \$25,000 will be saved from our current budget of \$173,000 in Non-Instructional Supplies by reducing consumption. \$5,000 will be saved from our current budget of \$15,000 in Heating & Fuel based on historical consumption. \$20,000 will be reduced from the current budget of \$220,000 in Building Repairs/ Maintenance by reducing consumption. There will be a \$19,736 reduction from the current budget of \$200,000 in Equipment Rental from reducing consumption and savings from Athletics. We will reduce the accounts for Replacement Equipment and New Equipment by \$50,000 from the current budget of \$100,000, requesting that the City of Shelton makes those purchases. Chairman Oppel stated that the overall adjustments come to \$989,413 bringing the 2017-2018 revisited budget to \$71,470,000. Arlene Liscinsky thanked Dominic Barone for his hard work and dedication as the Finance Director. Dominic Barone stated that the City of Shelton will be buying some new Chromebooks.

Dr. Darlisa Ritter MOVED to recommend to the full board to adjust our budget based on the adjustments provided by the Finance Director and Superintendent, reducing it by \$989,413.00 to \$71,470,000, SECONDED by Arlene Liscinsky. A vote was taken with all in favor. Motion carried.

Mark Holden mentioned that he's been in contact with the Chairman from the Trumbull BOE and they are looking into assigning devices to individual students. This will take the place of buying new textbooks while giving the students devices that they can use. Chairman Oppel stated that he would like to see the numbers from the Trumbull District related to making this kind of a change.

Deborah Keller asked for an update in regard to Fairchild Wheeler. Superintendent Clouet gave an update stating that the Commissioner is reviewing everything and there will be a hearing. If we don't like the decision of the Commissioner then we can take the case back to court.

Chairman Oppel adjourned the meeting at 6:22 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,

Anita Smith

Anita Smith

Recording Secretary

June 27, 2017