



MINUTES OF BOARD OF A&T BUDGET WORKSHOP
7:00 PM Monday, March 8, 2010
SHELTON CITY HALL
54 HILL STREET
Auditorium
SHELTON CT 06484

Roll Call
Board of A&T:

Chairman, Mark Holden
Chris Besescheck
Judson Crawford
Faith Hack
Charlotte Madar
John Zikaras

Board of Aldermen:

Alderman Lynn Farrell
Alderman John "Jack" Finn
Alderman Stanley Kudej
Alderman Noreen McGorty
Alderman Eric McPherson
Alderman John Papa
Alderman Anthony Simonetti

BOE Members Present:

Freeman Burr, Superintendent of Schools
Alan Cameron, Director of Finance
Arlene Liscinsky, Vice Chairman
Tom Minotti, Secretary
Win Oppel
Michael Pacowta
Dr. Beth Smith, PhD, Headmaster, Shelton High School
Timothy Walsh, Chairman

Call To Order/Pledge of Allegiance

Chairman Mark Holden called the meeting to order with the Pledge of Allegiance at 7:00 p.m. He noted that the Chairman of the BOE was not in the building as of yet because he was having difficulty finding a parking space but in his absence, the Superintendent of Schools, Freeman Burr would begin.

Freeman Burr, Superintendent of Schools addressed the Board of Apportionment & Taxation and the Board of Aldermen. He stated that he really appreciated the

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opportunity to be here this evening to present the Shelton BOE Budget Proposal for 2010 – 2011.

He wanted to begin with Shelton student achievement data because he believes that there is a lot of misconception that he'd like to clarify. Based on the last year's Connecticut Mastery Test Scores, 20 out of 20 CMT indicators demonstrate that Shelton Public Schools are at or exceed the State average of the number of students meeting goal in reading, writing, math and science. There are 7 out of 20 areas shown on the sheet which Mr. Cameron is handing out to everyone, showing that they are at or exceed the State average of the number of students meeting goal, but are behind in a four year trend of State achievement. So they don't look at data in a single year; they look at data for students over time. To basically address that, they are going to see another sheet that shows targets that they have set for student achievement this year in Shelton in seven areas that their students are still at or ahead of the State but are not keeping pace with the State's progress over four years.

Mr. Burr indicated that another important trend to note is that all of their schools have met the adequate yearly progress benchmark for a whole school with the exception of Lafayette, which as they know, is closing as of June 30th. He stated that he wanted to provide some clarity regarding Shelton Intermediate School (SIS) because he thinks there is a misconception about its performance. Shelton Intermediate School met all of the overall adequate yearly progress indicators. There were two areas for subgroups. One is a special education subgroup that did not meet the overall indicator. And another group in reading that did not meet the overall indicator. In all other areas, SIS did, indeed, meet all the overall benchmarks.

Mr. Burr stated that he thinks CAPT data is another misconception. Shelton High School met the mid? (*inaudible*) adequate yearly progress. Shelton High School students meet or exceed the State average in the number of students at or above proficiency in all four content areas – reading, writing, math and science. They exceed the State average in the number of students meeting goal in mathematics, and they are near the State average in the number of students meeting goal in reading and writing. Shelton High School is lagging behind the State in the number of students meeting goal in science. Targets, as they can see from the sheets provided, have been set for Shelton High School in all of these areas.

Mr. Burr commented that last week they saw a presentation by Dr. Beth Smith and her administrative team, and in that presentation with respect to the school improvement plan, Dr. Smith pointed out to Board members and the public how Shelton High School would not only address the goal areas but how they would look at the 15%-20% of students that are not meeting proficiency and how they would accommodate those students to raise their level. He encouraged them to get to SHS if they haven't gotten there as of yet, but he would tell them that, under Dr. Smith's able leadership, they will see that SHS will not only close the gap, but exceed the goal level in all areas and increase their proficiency level over the next couple of years.

Mr. Burr indicated that based upon that presentation, there is an expectation that the SAT scores will begin to close the disparity there has been with SHS and the State beginning this year. He thinks that they will begin to see a gradual closing of that gap.

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He also believes, that along with the CAPT, that they will begin to see progress in those areas as well.

Mr. Burr commented that he would also like to address some perceptions about Central Office. There is a perception regarding a top-heavy administrative staff, and he is well aware that one person's perception happens to be other people's reality. So he understands that is his reality. What he would encourage though, is that they look at the district reference group that Shelton finds itself in, and that is with other districts who are similarly comprised in terms of their schools – with one high school, one intermediate school, five to six elementary schools, etc. What they will find in all of those school systems is there is an assistant superintendent, a director of special education, someone in charge of curriculum, someone in charge of human resources, someone in charge of finance and someone in charge of technology in all of those schools. He does not believe that they are top-heavy, but in their budget proposal, they have proposed to cut Central Office significantly.

Mr. Burr stated that another piece of data that he thinks is important for them to note – currently, they have 49 employees that work at Central Office out of 700 employees in the District. That does not comprise 10% of their employees – it is under 10% - yet the perception remains and yes, they will have less than 49 employees there next year. Likely, they will be about 35.

Mr. Burr indicated that Central Office position eliminations will be over \$800K next year, which will be about 8% of next year's budget. Also, he thinks it is important to note that the \$800K that they are proposing to cut, and they will be over that, is actually 20% of the cuts that they are bringing forward. And yet, as he presented earlier, Central Office does not comprise 20% of the employees in the District.

Mr. Burr stated that there is this perception going on about 5.6% employee increases next year, and that is not accurate. The average increase for their employees next year will be 3%. He also pointed out that there are some of their contracts that have been back loaded – that is, back loaded into this year and next year. He also would like to remind the Board of A&T, as well as the Aldermen, that during the last negotiations, which obviously preceded his time, there was Alderman representation in those negotiations. And what was determined, was that the City could not afford increases in the first two years, thus it was the City encouraging that those increases go to Years 3 and 4. And unfortunately, they could not predict the times they would be in right now, but they are now in Year 3 and next year they will be in Year 4.

Mr. Burr indicated that he would also like to give them an overview of their proposed budget. He explained that what they have in their packets, if they've had an opportunity to look it over, is the salary and service agreements for next year projecting over \$4M. Special Education costs for their students with disabilities are projected at \$3M. He wants to explain how they arrived at the determination of what their special education costs would be.

Mr. Burr explained that they have a four year trend of special education cost overages ranging from \$800K over in 2004 -2005 to \$2.8M over in 2008–2009, and this year 2009-2010 they are projected to be over \$3M. Historically, when the Board has presented its budget to the Board of A&T and the BOA, they have only presented a placeholder. They

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have never presented the real special education costs associated with educating their students with disabilities. He added that he thought it would be helpful for everyone to understand that the enrollment in Shelton of students with disabilities in 2006-2007 was 417 students. The enrollment to this date of students in Shelton with disabilities is 582 students. Mr. Burr indicated that he has had several conversations with Mayor Lauretti regarding mandates passed on from the legislature, and he wholeheartedly agrees with the Mayor, that these are unfunded – but he doesn't refer to them as unfunded because they do get some monies and some reimbursements to offset the costs. He does agree with the Mayor that these mandates are creating tremendous challenges for their District. However, at the end of the day, the students who are identified with disabilities attend Shelton Public Schools. There are students, and they must consider, that they have to educate these students as much as they have to educate the students that comprise their regular population as well.

Mr. Burr stated that their special education costs, and he thinks this is another perception that he'd like to deal with, are well documented in all Finance Meeting minutes for the last four years. What has happened is that they've covered those overages with the funding subsidies that they get, albeit that they are inadequate, but they have used those to offset the costs and they have closed the gap with the monies they've received from the City, which means that they've been borrowing, if you will, from the regular education side of the equation in order to balance these costs of which they have no recourse. There is no way they can just say that they aren't paying this. If they are familiar with the legislation and familiar with the mandates in terms of servicing their students with disabilities, then they do understand that if they were to unilaterally deny services, they would likely end up in court. Then they would be paying court costs and risking, if they lose that hearing, basically what would happen is that they would not only pay for attorney costs, but they will pay for the associated costs for any students that they lose a case to.

Mr. Burr indicated that he also wanted to bring to everyone's attention that while they save some money in the consolidation of opening Perry Hill School and closing Lafayette – to fully open Perry Hill is going to cost them about a half a million dollars. That will also allow them to make sure that they meet the staffing needs there and maintain class sizes at a reasonable rate in the way that they are maintaining class sizes for Grades 5 and 6 at this time. It also means that they will basically be reallocating their enrichment in Gifted and Talented services in Perry Hill to address all students.

Mr. Burr stated that he also wanted to briefly talk to them about the projected foundation budget. He indicated that what they have submitted to them is not a rollover of their existing costs, nor a rollover of all existing services. To roll everything over, if they've followed along with him - the \$4M in labor agreements and service agreements; the \$3M in costs they can't quantify, which is a projection based on trend data for students with disabilities; and then finally, the roughly half million dollars to open Perry Hill - so, that is \$7.5M. They have not come to the Board of A&T, nor are they presenting to the BOA, a budget of \$7.5M. What they determined that they would do is to offset the costs they can quantify. The costs they can quantify are the costs that are labor agreements and their service agreements. Since those total \$4M, the budget that has been submitted to them cuts \$4M in position eliminations across every level of the District. He might also add, so that they understand, they are cognizant of the current condition, the economic climate all over the State of Connecticut, and the message has been sent through

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Central Office as well as through their school side as well as to their Staff – that at this time, they must learn to do more with less. They understand that. With that comes one understanding that they all have to be prepared to deal with - the important services now are the absolute essential services. The things that are nice to have, they cannot afford at this juncture, and it maybe several years before they can afford them again.

Mr. Burr indicated that to close that out their request is \$3.5M. They believe that with \$3.5M they can meet the achievement targets that they shared with them today. They believe that they will be able to maintain existing class size ratios at their elementary schools and Perry Hill. They believe that their curriculum initiatives, in terms of professional development, etc. will continue but they will likely have to spread them out over time as part of a belt tightening measure. They can't do as much in as short period of time that they would like because the resources are limited. Some of the budget impacts – they will reduce some of the course offerings at SHS. Again under the leadership of Dr. Smith and with her course offerings with her students, they will start to make more prudent decisions that students are endeavoring to sign up for and to take. And they do understand that courses that are not as popular among their students, they'll have to consider what to do with those courses in terms of saving money.

Mr. Burr stated that they will also be reducing electives at the Intermediate School as a cost saving measure. They have a talented new leader at Shelton Intermediate School, and some of the creative ways to look at this, by going from a four marking period system to a trimester in an effort to offer fewer electives over time but still give students the opportunity to pursue electives. There is a possible increase with what they are proposing in class sizes at Shelton Intermediate School because they expect to be seating a larger enrollment there in 7th grade than they will have in 8th grade.

Mr. Burr indicated that with their building project work and their maintenance costs – those are also things that they will have to spread out over time. They will have to really look at what the priorities are in terms of their building operations, improvements, etc. and the remainder they just have to bite the bullet and do without.

Mr. Burr stated that they are well aware of Mayor Lauretti's budget proposal - no increase to the Shelton BOE. So, he thinks it is important to let them know that they have worked at what a zero would look like. He stated that what he'd like to present is a few things. First, they have revised the budget and modified it with a zero. One of the things that they thought is that they would go from roughly, for example, 28 certified staff cuts to 50 certified staff cuts. So they did the budget based on that. The problem is this – that in the process of making all of those eliminations, they will incur an additional \$1.2M in unemployment costs. So, if they just cut at a zero, they go into a deficit of \$1.2M. So, they went back to the table and found that they would have to add an additional 20 positions to offset what they would incur as unemployment costs.

Mr. Burr indicated that he would like to interject at this time, that they are working with the Shelton Education Association on the possibility of an early retirement incentive that hopefully, if they can come to an agreement, will maybe save jobs which will reduce their potential unemployment costs, but also it would save some positions given the scope of what he is talking about here.

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Additionally, class size increases will be roughly over 15% per school meaning that they will put an average of four additional students in every one of their elementary classrooms. The Perry Hill \$40M facility - that has been invested in Perry Hill, they will probably go from an ideal staffing model of 38 teachers to accommodate roughly 900 students to a model where they would have to staff with 34 regular ed teachers. Additionally, he thinks it is important to note, that Dr. Smith and the High School staff have worked diligently and put a lot of effort in preparing the accreditations self-study for next fall. As they look at that, at what a zero would look like, what they would have to minimally expect is that there would be some areas in that accreditation visit that will be beneath the standards set forth by the New England Association of Schools and Colleges.

Mr. Burr indicated that this would mean that they would be likely to face the potential of warning reports in areas, and that would mean they would have to report back annually their progress in shoring up the areas that are weak. Coming from a district with experience in a high school that lost its accreditation, all he can encourage is that they don't want to be in a place where their high school's accreditation is at risk or their high school is in such a challenging place that they can't do the types of progress with respect to curriculum and the resources that have to be provided for their students. It would be a terrible thing to risk that going forward.

Mr. Burr stated that a zero would also mean, obviously, a zero would mean additional Central Office Administration positions. He wanted to point out something to them that is a little known fact, in his attempt to reorganize Central Office and to consolidate services and combine - they came across a regulation. Because of the number of staff that they have servicing their students with disabilities, if they have over 49 staff, which they do, they have to add additional certified administrators in the area of special education. It is not a choice; it's a regulation. So the essence of that, no matter how much they would want to cut, they are required to have three administrative positions just on their special education side in order to supervise the existing special education staff that they have – and that is even with the cuts they see – even in a zero world. They would still need those three positions. That is a requirement by law.

Mr. Burr commented that another thing he thinks is important for everyone around the table to know, that they actually have more staff providing services to students on the special education side out of Central Office than they do providing in their regular education management and oversight to their curriculum.

Mr. Burr also mentioned that the potential impact of the zero, and he didn't want to say potential, because he's going to talk about ten things and all of these would be real. They would reduce one Housemaster position at the Intermediate School as well as at the High School and that means that the one Assistant Principal that they have, who currently serves several schools and was earmarked for Perry Hill where there are 900 students, that position could also be in jeopardy.

Currently, they spend about \$852K on their athletics program. He stated that he is a diehard sports fan that believes in athletics and believes in all extracurricular activities, anything that would support student motivation and interest in school. However, in a zero world, facing \$1.2M in unemployment costs, there is no way he could support funding an athletic budget when they are not giving their students the basic service

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delivery that they are supposed to as a municipality, as a Board of Education. There is no way to fund athletics, if they are not giving students the full service of teaching and learning. Their core business, while athletics and extracurricular activities are critically important, what he would say is their core business is not athletics. Their core business is teaching and learning and educating their students so that in the future they can not only be successful in school, but they can be successful in life.

Mr. Burr stated that most of them around this table, who may be like him, come from an environment where our parent's goal was that they would be better educated than they were. That was the one undying goal that they had for them. As he experienced himself, his mother was a high school drop-out, who told him before he knew what college was, that he would be going to college. He didn't even know what college meant, but he knew what it meant to her – and he thinks there are many around this table that understand that.

Mr. Burr stated that it would also mean the potential of ten guidance counselors being cut and six media specialists. He pointed out that these two positions, the BOE, many of the people that are around here tonight, spent many, many years working hard to get these positions put into the schools, to man the elementary libraries so that their kids would have the opportunity to select books and reading materials that could benefit them. They would be at the bare minimum with the guidance counselors and they offer a tremendous service to the students.

Mr. Burr indicated that his closing remarks were going to be pretty simplistic, and then Mr. Walsh has a few comments, but he would say is this – they are dangerously close with this budget, especially if they are in zero world, of pitting their regular education students against their students with disabilities. As the Wilton Superintendent says much better than he does, because he's stealing his words – and he believes that Wilton is a much wealthier district than they are – Wilton is currently paying over 20% of their budget on 10% of their kids. Mr. Burr indicated that they are close to that and when they are doing that they need to understand the basic rule is that money has to come from somewhere. The less money they have available to benefit all of their students will not force them to shirk their mandates. They will still be responsible for the mandates that have been passed on to them by the Federal Government as well as by the State Legislature. So, that is something that he thinks is dangerous, if they are in a world where they are pitting those students against each other in terms of their education. Because he believes, in reality, when they talk about the students – right behind the students are their parents. So, what is next, are they going to pit the parents of student's with disabilities against parents of students having regular education needs? It is not a good place to be, and if they choose to be in a place like that, then he thinks that they are basically shirking their collective responsibilities on providing the best teaching and learning opportunities they can to all of their students.

Mr. Burr stated that a zero also means, if they are \$63.1M, when they take off the \$3.5M of unpredictable special education cost overruns and they add in the \$1.2M of unemployment benefits, then that \$63M going into this year will be worth about \$58.7M to them. And remember, those cost increases, once they eliminate that \$4M; they are still paying the cost increases that they make. He hopes that all of them around the table can answer any questions that they have about their budget, about their performance. He believes, in all his heart and soul, and certainly one of the reasons he

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came to Shelton, that Shelton was poised to make tremendous strides in terms of academic achievement for all of their students. That is what he believed when he came here. He still believes that. He definitely believes it with the budget he proposed – and he shouldn't say "I" because he had the work of a lot of people at this table and people in the audience who need their schools. If they talk to everyone of them individually, they will tell them, this budget, the \$64.6M that they are asking for is a budget of tremendous sacrifice. For example, kids who have had reading tutors, paid at a very, very nominal fee – those tutors will go away. These tutors have been helping students that are struggling readers. He asked them to consider the points of his remarks, what they've placed into the budget, and also, he encouraged them to ask any questions about the budget that they need answers for. He would invite any of them to come forward and sit down with him to discuss any concerns that they have about their budget. He thanked everyone and turned the discussion to their BOE Chairman Tim Walsh for some brief remarks.

Timothy Walsh, BOE Chairman, addressed the Boards and thanked them for a few extra minutes so they can explain their story because he thinks the size of their budget, which is about 60% of the community's budget, deserves a little bit of time. He appreciates it and he appreciates the efforts of John Anglace because he knows that he has communicated with them.

He pointed out to everyone there, that there Mr. Anglace is not at the table for the first time in 20 years because his wife is very ill and he's spending the time with her. John has worked very hard and diligently over the past several years with the BOE to try to bridge the gap. He's tried to make all of us – Shelton – and not us against them. Mr. Walsh stated that he was struck by the Mayor's remarks that no City employees would be laid off because he considers all of their employees to be City employees too. And as they see, their layoffs could be very, very significant.

Mr. Walsh commented that some people have asked why they are closing Lafayette School. He stated that Lafayette School – the proportion of free and reduced lunch at Lafayette School was very much more than the rest of their population. The State kept pressing and pressing because they want that spread out, so they have worked very hard since last spring with a redistricting plan to close Lafayette School and redistrict those kids into appropriate facilities. They've just completed, although they haven't voted on it yet, they are on the cusp of voting for the redistricting plan again that they've worked on for over a year with a paid consultant that did a tremendous job for them.

The average class size, generally speaking, in all the K-4 elementary schools, as the result of this plan will be about 20, which is ideal. If they don't get some additional funding, as the Superintendent mentioned, the class size will increase by four students in every one of those classes, and that is only estimate. He's sure it could go higher if more significant, well it couldn't be more significant, because what they are proposing is a zero increase for this year, a zero increase for this present year and the year before that they got 2.6%. So they certainly haven't been rolling in dough, and he thinks that they also have to be impressed with their new superintendent and how he's attacked the situation they are living in. They are still in litigation budget; they are working hard to try to achieve a zero base by the end of the year. They may not; they may be back to the BOA to ask for some help in that regard. But they are working hard.

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Mr. Walsh stated that they could also look at Mr. Burr's educational goals and see that they are on the verge of greatness and they just need a little support to reach that point. Especially, with the scores and how they are distributed, they wanted everyone to see that in black and white, so that there would be no questions that they are doing well and they are performing better than perceived and their scores continue to increase. Mr. Walsh asked for the Board's consideration to restore some of the funds that have been depleted from their budget. Mr. Walsh asked if any of the other BOE members would like to comment.

Arlene Liscinsky, Vice Chairman, stated that she really doesn't have any comments because she thinks that most of the sentiments have been echoed tonight and she thinks that the seriousness of this budget year is felt by everyone. As a Board of Education, they have certainly tried very hard to do with what they have and they've had tremendous support in the past. Everywhere she speaks she tells people, that she's been a parent in the school system who had two daughters go through this school system, and she's proud of the education that they've received. They both went on to great colleges. They are both hopefully gainfully employed, one is yet to be gainfully employed. If anything, now is not the time to turn their backs on education, the kids and the future because with the economy the way it is – they need to pay it forward. Ms. Liscinsky commented that she thinks that is their responsibility as adults in this community.

Ms. Liscinsky wanted to echo one thing. If they don't fund their educational system properly, they aren't going to attract the best and brightest in terms of teachers and they aren't going to attract the best and the brightest in terms of companies, and the value of their homes will not be the best, as they would like to see it in future years. She added that she thinks the community has to make education a number one priority above and beyond anything. She thanked the Board.

Chairman Holden, Board of A&T stated that essentially, they are all between a rock and a hard place. Every person at this table, because on the one hand, they don't want to neglect the education of the children because that is a critical factor for the future; on the other hand, he was on foreclosedata.com this morning and he found that there are 159 homes in the city of Shelton that are in the process of foreclosure now.

He indicated that he called up a friend of his that used to be a banker before being downsized and he asked him what it meant in terms of people that are in trouble. His friend told him that the banks are so swamped with people who have stopped paying their mortgages that it is now taking them 6 -8 months before they start the foreclosure process after someone stops making mortgage payments. On top of that, they have a lot of people who are struggling. They are keeping on top of their bills but it is hurting. They've got unemployment in the general range of 10% by the time they figure in people who have fallen off of the system because they have been out of work for so long.

Chairman Holden stated that he has heard estimates of about 20% of their population is underemployed – they are either not working in their chosen profession or they are working reduced hours or for reduced pay. His hope this evening is that they will be able to work together to try to find some ways, hopefully, with some new eyes, that they can narrow that gap in a way that won't hurt either the student's education or the taxpayer's

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pockets. He doesn't know how far they will be able to get but anything they can get in that regard is going to be a help for everyone. With that he has a first question.

Chairman Holden commented that essentially he knows that there are a number of students who have parking passes and he knows that by State law they are required to have a seat on the bus for all of them. The question he has is, with the availability of software where they can play games over the telephone and caller ID, would it be possible that they could reduce the number of bus routes by having a system where students who happen to need a ride on a day when they normally wouldn't, could call in ahead of time and then have a floater bus that could go around picking them up.

This might also be something with some of the parents who will routinely drive their kids to school, but some days perhaps they can't. He asked if there was something that they could look into to close some of that gap.

Alan Cameron, BOE Finance, responded that it is certainly something that they could look into. What they have to have is a seat for everyone on the worst weather days of the year. If a parent chooses to let their children drive to school everyday but three, they are supposed to have the bus there available to them on those three days that they are not. And that is what the law requires of them. If they could get the law changed, so that they could arrange it – he likes this idea, it's a great idea. What happens to them is that on those three days that they don't get buses there, they've got a lot of unhappy people calling them, and calling up the Mayor.

Chairman Holden asked if they could get floater buses that would come into play when they are needed.

Mr. Cameron responded that they actually do have floater buses right now. All he can say is that it is an idea that they can explore. In next year's budget, they will have two less buses already. As best as they could, through the redistricting, they have tried to downsize the bus routes, and they've been successful. He commented that he didn't think that idea could translate into next year unless they got some legislative relief.

Mr. Walsh commented that he would like to address that too because he was on the Board when they instituted the parking passes at Shelton High School. Their motive was not to collect more money or to make money, but to encourage more kids to ride the bus, - and they line up to pay \$100 to park in the parking lot. It is unfortunate that their plan didn't work but they also worked very closely with Mr. Anglace and the BOA to try to do some re-routing around all of their elementary schools. They were successful to a degree at a number of the schools. At Mohegan, the buses go in and out to get the school buses off the roads, but that didn't encourage very much more ridership on those buses either. Parents still bring their kids to school in the school lots and the roads approaching the schools are still backed up. They have communicated with other school districts, and they are basically having the same problem. And it bothers all of them to see a bus going down the road with only a dozen kids on it when it could hold 60. The fact is they don't ride the bus.

Mr. Cameron stated that if they could get a system where parents could give them waivers or something like that – that would be great, but it would just have to be legislated.

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Ms. Liscinsky indicated that they approached their State representative about three years ago to possibly introduce legislation for that very reason. Obviously, nothing has happened. But on the subject of buses, there is a mandate; they were all up in Hartford last Wednesday because it was Day on the Hill, and one of the biggest issues right now is mandated seat belts on school buses. There are a lot of BOE's that are very upset about that. Obviously, there was a tragic incident that occurred, but if they mandate this, and they were talking about July, it would cost \$40K per bus to retrofit with seatbelts. They have 56 buses and they figured out that it would be \$1.2M additional costs incurred because of that.

Mr. Walsh added that they may have to put aides on the buses too because kids would hit each other with the seatbelts – again, it was counterproductive.

Mr. Burr commented that a couple of opportunities that the Board would have to consider is magnet school transportation. The Board has always provided that support for their Shelton parents who have chosen options. The Board would have to consider whether or not they wanted to continue. Also, they get a subsidy for that from the State, so that would have to look at realistically, is it worth the money, when they consider the subsidies they get to offset those costs.

Mr. Burr stated that another big ticket item for them, and he wants this in the appropriate context, they have done a good job of providing services for their high needs students with disabilities outside of Shelton. What they need to look at is how to be more creative, they need to look at the internal capacity within Shelton public schools to develop the programming that is needed for their students. That doesn't mean that they are going to bring everybody back at one time, but if they can start to establish appropriate service delivery models then they can begin to bring students back. They will save on their on their district transportation as well as their out of district tuition costs. That is something that right now, they do not have a track record for. That is why they see full expectations for special ed costs next year, because until they can build that model, they won't have a cost savings.

Chairman Holden indicated that Alderman Finn has some questions and he'd like to ask first because he may have to leave this meeting early.

Alderman Finn stated that this question is directed at the Superintendent or to Mr. Cameron. The Board of Education reduced their budget by over \$4M which will result in a reduction of 100.5 positions. If the Board of A&T approves the Mayor's budget as presented, the BOE could face up to a reduction of 162 positions. An additional three administrators, 44 teaching positions, 71 ½ other positions such as custodians, tutors, secretaries, etc. This would result in the BOE having to pay up to 26 weeks of unemployment at a cost of \$16K per person. Would the BOE also be required to pay unemployment benefits for any part time positions depending on the number of hours of work per pay period? How would the Board pay for these benefits? With the reduction in Staff, what effect would this have on class sizes and test scores? What programs would the BOE have to reduce or eliminate?

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Chairman Holden stated, as a point of information, Alderman Finn indicated that it is a \$4M reduction, but by his math it is \$3.45M. Now, that is still a significant number but half a million dollars is real significant in this budget.

End of Tape 1A 7:49 p.m.

Alderman Finn responded that is right out of the information that they sent to him.

Chairman Holden stated that the actual, according to the budget run-offs is a \$3.45M reduction. It is still serious – but let's not make it worse than it is.

Alderman Finn indicated that those are his four questions if they could please answer them.

Mr. Cameron responded that the information is correct, they would be paying up to 26 weeks of unemployment at a cost of approx. \$16K per person, per position. They would have to pay unemployment for the part-time employees based on their average weekly wages over the preceding period. How would the Board pay for these benefits?

Mr. Cameron responded that, in the zero scenario, when Supt. Burr discussed the zero scenario, he explained that when they first got there, they planned 28 certified teacher reductions. It is 29 because there is an administrator as well. Then they followed that when they were trying to get to the zero or the \$63,100,000 budget and they figured out that they would need to eliminate an additional 22 teaching positions. Then they got the information about the unemployment which was approximately another \$1.2M. That was when they realized that they need to go back after 22 more positions. So, included in their zero assumption, which would result in total employee reductions, at this point, and this is very preliminary. The Board has not met on this. This is Staff work that the Board has asked them to do because when the Mayor presented his budget, they felt like, it would not be appropriate to come before this Board and not present what a potential employee impact was. But the Board hasn't met on this, they haven't voted on this so it is just approximate stuff. But, in order to accommodate the unemployment, they would layoff a total of 148.3 people which would be a total of 71.8 teachers, 4 administrators, and 72.5 others.

In response to Alderman Finn's question about what effect this would have on class size and test scores, Supt. Burr responded that he talked about an average class size, but when they do an average, they lose some other things. But in the scenario, he provided an example from one school with a current class size in kindergarten which they keep at 15 would go to 22 – that is for all of the half day sessions. So that is as high as seven. From first grade it goes from 20 to 26; 4th grade it goes from 21 to 27. Because of the formulas in terms of contractual obligations, every class is not affected the same way because there are pockets of kids enrolled in different grades that are smaller. But if they look at a school like Sunnyside which is a very small school, they will have class sizes that will be like 25, 24, and 23 where they currently have 20, 16 and 12. Another example would be a school like Long Hill where currently they have 20 students in the 4th grade that would go to 26 and in 3rd grade they would go from 20 to 27. But when they take the aggregate average, it is about four kids per class.

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Mr. Burr responded that the impact to test scores is hard to say. He thinks, depending upon if they want to look at the research, at best, the information out in research is mixed on the impact of test scores with class enrollment. Clearly, the level of teaching and learning that the student gets with the teacher in front of them is a higher indicator. But he thinks that one of the things that they have to understand is that when they make this adjustment, with the class sizes, it is going to be a challenge, for their teachers during the first year or two to transition because one of the things that Shelton historically, has been very good at doing is keeping their class sizes at a manageable level which has been good for their teachers.... and he would argue, if they look at that data, it has been good for their kids – because in those seven areas they are still at the same rate in one area - and exceed the State in the other areas. The only reason that they identify these is because the four year trend says the State is accelerating faster than they are. So they've set the targets so that their acceleration pace will continue but obviously, he doesn't want to say there will be a definite impact, but he thinks that they should have to expect some impact on it.

Mr. Burr commented that the big thing, currently, they have reading assistance in many of their schools for the younger kids to get the support that they need. In a world where they are going to have less tutors, less reading assistance, etc. a lot of the support their kids are currently getting in the areas that they find challenging is going to go by the wayside. They are going to continue to do their language arts curriculum development for the 5th – 6th. They think that is critically important because it is a \$40M facility. They can't move 30+ teachers into a new facility and not make sure that the curriculum is state of the art. But, on the other side, as he indicated before, it is going to take them longer to articulate that curriculum upward to grade 7, 8 etc. as well as articulate it downward. They do have to look at some of the software licenses, because now, relative to his remarks before, they have to decide the nice to have versus the need to have. So they have to evaluate all of their software licenses to determine which of those software programs are actually making a difference in student performance and in student achievement. There will be some impact. He thinks the bigger impact is going to be at the high school. They are going to have reduced the electives available to students. They may have to close some sections in their core academic areas. Again, their Intermediate School Principal is coming up with a creative way to make sure electives are still there but they are going to scale back electives and have more teachers at grade 7. Some of the programmatic aspects are going to be effected. They are set with math. They do have a set math curriculum. They do have to beef up their science, particularly the print material in their elementary schools, and they are probably going to have to do that over time.

Alderman Finn commented that there are rumors spreading around town that there is a possibility of closing a second school. He asked if the BOE was looking at closing another school besides Lafayette School.

Mr. Walsh responded that he would try to relieve the Superintendent of that because it could end up to be a political question but, yes, Jack, if they look at the number of layoffs that they are anticipating, then they may have to close another school. They may be no other option. When they talk about reducing staff by 148 people, they wouldn't have enough staff to staff all of the schools. So, unfortunately, they hope it doesn't come to that. It would be a last resort – absolutely.

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Mr. Burr stated that he thinks that one of the things they've invested in is a redistricting plan – and with everything that's been said, if fully funded, that redistricting plan is not going to impact class size at any of their schools. They may have a minor impact, as he said, at the Intermediate School, in Grade 7, but they are going to be pretty close to what they have at all of their elementary schools as well as Perry Hill. He added that the High School, obviously, with reduced electives and reduced core areas - they have to expect some sections would be closed meaning that there will be some larger sizes.

Chairman Holden indicated that Judd has something he wants to address.

Judd Crawford, Board of A&T, indicated that he wanted to thank the Finance Director of the BOE, the Chairman of the Finance Committee, and the Chairman of the BOE for coming through with a positive figure at the end of the year – not coming in with a negative figure.

Alderman Papa addressed Mr. Burr and stated that the City doesn't know what money they are getting from the State. They won't know until they make their budget and they don't make their budget until May 15th – and they won't know until after.

Alderman Papa stated that he doesn't want to see anybody get laid off. They have a great system and he wants to keep it that way. He asked if the administration was having any discussion with the Union about the wages, because basically salary is where they are short on funds. Before anybody loses their job, he knows they can talk – if there are going to be some give backs. He knows that they have four bargaining units. He knows that two agreed to a day and half furlough, deferred payment. What are the chances of talking to all of the unions to find out if they all want to have their jobs, what can they do to have a reduction, or whatever they have to do, to make up the difference.

Mr. Burr responded that one of the reasons that they are looking at the early retirement incentive is, hopefully, if they can find common ground and agreement, the goal would be, not that they could match them up one by one – but relative to what they propose to reduce, to be able to get enough retirements to offset that and give them a cost savings within their salary account. Then take away, to the extent that they only have a few people being unemployed – something realistic. With respect to the budget litigation, he wants to provide some clarity, all of their bargain units capitulated and offered up deferred payments of 1 ½ days. Also, he thinks it is important to note that all Central Office personnel, most of which are non-bargaining units, offered up two days. He stated that he has not formally requested any of their unions to come to the table to negotiate. They did talk during budget litigations. They did indicate that they would be willing to talk with any union if they wanted to discuss how they might minimize the impact on potential costs. They also believe that there is great opportunity with retirement incentive because they believe there is a real cost savings there. They have kind of calculated that it could be \$950K. It could go upward, and again taken off the bottom line, it could give them some respite.

Alderman Papa commented that once they find out what that number is, then they could go to all the administrators, the teachers, and whatever the custodial – all the unions to find out what that number is to see if there is an ability to re-adjust that increase. Because they are talking about big number and they don't know what the State is going to give them, so...

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Mr. Burr responded that he has had conversations with the State and at this point, all of the legislators, and they found this out when they were up at Day on the Hill last Wednesday; they are looking to hold the cities and the municipalities harmless. So they don't think they are going to see a decrease in what is being offered to them. He thinks that potentially they could get decreased again. He thinks the excess cost grant, which is what comes to them to offset those special education costs, that likely is going to be cut back again. But as far as the ECS, the City of Shelton had no impact this year plus their latest figures tell them that there is additional money coming because they didn't cut as deeply as they thought. So he thinks that there is an additional \$130K that will go back to the City.

Alderman Papa asked if they had any idea when they would find out about retirees so that they have a number. Is there a certain date that the potential retirees have to notify them?

Mr. Burr responded that he thinks it is important to note, because they have certified personnel, whether they are teachers or administrators, they have to send notices. Because under the State law, all certified Staff has to be notified no later than March 31st. That is under the State law. So they are likely, he is meeting with all non-tenured teachers tomorrow to explain the impact of what the worst cast scenario could look like. Subsequently, HR and Finance, as well as the administrators, will review those lists. Those same lists will be reviewed with each of the bargaining units. So they will be talking to people. This would have to go to the Board for approval at the next meeting. Then letters to their Staff that would basically tell them, if there are no changes, their job will be eliminated as of July 1st. They would go out no later than May 31st.

Mr. Walsh stated that he would like to emphasize for everyone - that is the State law. People think that they use that as a ploy but they don't. They must notify those people on a yearly basis – it is mandated – but it gets turned around sometimes.

Alderman Papa responded that yes, he understands that.

Chairman Holden asked if there were any questions from the Board of A&T.

Charlotte Madar, Board of A&T, asked if they had given any thought at all to vouchers, because she knows that there are other towns that use vouchers. She indicated that she knows that at St. Lawrence, which is more expensive than St. Joe's, that their total cost per student is \$5,500. Their cost, with the number of students that they have in the budget, is approximately \$12K. If they could voucher out, they would be saving like \$7K per student. And if they could get 100 students out, then there would be \$700K. She asked if there was any legality or any way that this could be approached or done.

Mr. Burr responded that he would clarify, and he'll ask Mr. Cameron to elaborate. He indicated that first of all, they are hiring certified teachers. Private schools, such as parochial schools are not required to hire certified teachers. So they incur an additional cost with respect to that. Also, they provide the support services for students with disabilities that attend ...

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Charlotte Madar commented that she isn't questioning that – she is just saying that if a parent says they'll take a voucher because they'd like their child to go to St. Lawrence or St. Joe's – it would be their decision. It is totally their option. It is not to say that one is certified and one is not certified. She knows that they do the transportation and everything else.

Mr. Burr stated that they also provide the services. They are picking up those costs.

Charlotte Madar indicated that she is just saying – if a parent says that they would love to have a voucher – that is totally optional.

Ms. Liscinsky responded to Charlotte Madar that she thinks that is a legislative piece. As she may well know, there are many states – Florida, some others down south, the core area of Washington D.C., that have a program. But that is, whether they want to call it a political debate or a philosophical difference, Connecticut does not have that option legislatively to allow that.

Charlotte Madar asked if it could be brought up somehow.

Ms. Liscinsky responded that they would have to go to the Legislature. She added, that personally, she's an advocate of public education and she thinks that as a community it is their responsibility. As a parent, if she chooses to send her child to private school – for example, she chose to send her kids to private universities, so should she ask for a voucher because they didn't go to UCONN. She doesn't think that is fair and she would never advocate that for anyone. It is no different. Legislatively, her questions has to be addressed at the State level not here at the local level.

Mr. Burr stated that if they are funding them out of the public budget, then they are out of the public budget – they are funding private education.

Charlotte Madar added yes, but they'd be saving \$7K per student. She reiterated that it is just something that she wanted to ask to see if it had been investigated.

Mr. Walsh responded that it is a fair question, but it isn't their purview.

Mr. Burr indicated that Connecticut is more looking at charter options and magnet options – those have been the things. They have to pay the tuitions to the magnet schools. That is kind of Connecticut's response under the Sheff ruling of their obligation to provide students the opportunity for choice.

Faith Hack, Board of A&T, asked Mr. Burr if they go into a scenario where they have larger class sizes, are they not then going to be putting their special need children into, in fact larger classes – the answer to that of course, is yes, but what impact will it have on those students.

Mr. Burr responded that obviously all of their students will be impacted. Next year they will have to implement the response intervention. That is for any students that have any challenging academic areas, whether they are students with disabilities or not, they have to service. So they will be looking at opportunities to service all students who have needs. But there is no question that both regular ed students and some of their students

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with disabilities will be impacted. If they happen to be in a grade level population where the enrollment is relatively low, they could end up at a grade where perhaps the impact is minimal. But if they end up in one of those rooms with 25 or 26, or even 27 kids, then the impact will be much more severe obviously. There won't be any one answer for each kid. A lot of it is just going to be determined by whether the bubbles of student enrollment are each of the schools.

Chairman Holden stated that he wanted to toss another question out. He stated that one of the things that the Community Center has done as a way of reducing costs is they are actually outsourcing their clean-up of the Community Center. It went out to bid, he forgets the numbers off the top of his head, but it seemed to be cost effective. Is that something that BOE could look into as a way of controlling the costs of taking care of the schools.

Mr. Burr responded that obviously, he is relatively new, but he thinks he has a little bit of information but he will ask Alan Cameron to correct him if he's wrong. His understanding is that they attempted to do that when some of the contractors saw the number of staff that they had per the areas that they have to clean. Their rates did not come close to what they are paying. Supt. Burr commented that may not be accurate so he asks Win or Alan to respond.

Mr. Cameron responded that it's a good question and something that they've been concerned about over the years. A couple of times, over the years, they have invited vendors in and asked them to do feasibility studies and come back with proposals. The first thing that they ask them is how many custodians do they have, how many square feet in the buildings, what are the hours of operation, what do they spend on supplies, etc. and what Supt. Burr said is correct. Most recently they investigated this with a company that actually supervises the cleaning in the Stamford public schools and the maintenance in the Trumbull public schools. So they're here, they're located in Bridgeport, they have gone through this. They came back to them and said they couldn't do it for the same cost as they are doing it.

Alderman Papa commented that he recalls the Mayor had been involved in those conversations.

Arlene Liscinsky added that it was with Al Barbetta.

Mr. Cameron commented that it is something that they've looked at. Robin Robeck came in last year to do the same thing, and came basically to the same place. That doesn't mean they should stop doing it – no, it just means that so far they haven't found a better answer.

Alderman Papa commented to Mr. Cameron that last year they spoke about custodial work, and just to clarify about the pool area – they just have one person cleaning only the area of the pool and the locker rooms, not the whole building. So it's a lot different than the high school and all the other schools where there is a much bigger area to maintain. It's not that it can't be done – he doesn't know but he just wanted to clarify that the pool and locker rooms are the only thing that they outsource.

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Alderman McPherson stated that he wanted to thank everyone for being here tonight. He appreciates the Superintendent's comments, Mr. Walsh's comments and Ms. Liscinsky's comments. They are in unprecedented times and he echoes Alderman Papa's concerns too – that nobody wants to see anybody lose a job. They are here at the table, and he hopes that they can work together and he looks forward to that.

Alderman McPherson indicated that he wanted to follow up on Mark's comment with regard to contracting out. He knows that some universities have contracted out some of the supervision positions in the maintenance area and they were able to achieve some cost savings with regard to salary and benefits. He indicated that might be an opportunity for them at some point.

Alderman McPherson indicated that the other issue he has, and he touched on it lightly last year, is the issue of non-resident students. He knows the Board has a provision in place to try to identify the non-resident students, and he doesn't mean the special needs, but other non-resident students. He added that he's aware that there are some mitigating circumstances with regard to guardianship or whatever, but with those aside, he asked if there is any recourse that the Board is taking to recoup the monies to make people pay who aren't residents that are using the Shelton school systems. He thinks that deprives from their own kids. The taxpayers are paying for that. He asked if there was any way they could recoup. He doesn't know how many there are – he has no number, but he wanted to know if there was any way to go after that money and maybe the cost of legal fees on top of that and use that money to bridge a gap or use it on a program for their kids.

Mr. Burr indicated that is one of the areas that their Assistant Superintendent, Lorraine Rosner oversees. He didn't want to get into details. They obviously have residency hearings but he asked Lorraine to comment.

Lorraine Rosner, Asst. Superintendent responded that if they find out that a family may not be a legal resident of Shelton, CT they send a certified letter to them and they try to get to them to a hearing, with their evidence in place, so they can briefly ask them. With a residency hearing, the burden of proof is on the parent and child to prove that they live in Shelton. The problem that they find, is if they are not Shelton residents, often they are in an economic situation where no matter what they do, if they wanted to go after them for a half a year tuition, they just don't have any money to pay. But they do try very hard.

Alderman McPherson commented that was one of the concerns he had so he thanked them for that; he knew they had a system in place but he wasn't sure how they go after it.

Mr. Burr commented that he thinks there has been a concerted effort on the part of all of their principals, headmasters, and Ms. Rosner to identify those kids. They have had several residency hearings thus far.

Chairman Holden asked how many they have had this year.

Ms. Rosner responded that this is the second one for this year. They had 14 incidents last year where they asked families to leave.

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Chairman Holden asked if they got them to leave.

Ms. Rosner responded that yes, they did.

Chairman Holden asked if any money had been recouped last year.

Ms. Rosner responded no, there was none.

Alderman McPherson indicated that he had one last question. He stated that recently he heard something on the news in regard to the State, and that they are looking to shut off every other light or every two lights on Interstates 95, 91, and 84 – and they project that they are going to save about \$2M with that. In that regard, he was coming home the other evening and he saw the Intermediate School, the High School and the pathways going down to the fields were all lit up. He asked if there was any way that they might be able to reduce some of those lights and try to save some kind of money. Every little bit will help.

Mr. Walsh responded that currently, the way that the parking lots are wired doesn't necessarily allow for them to do a reduction. At some point they either have to bite the bullet to rewire a piece of it or go up and pull out every other bulb, but they really don't have the right equipment for that. It's been looked at and they may get to that point this year. It's going to be worth it to rent the truck, go up and take out the lights.

Chairman Holden asked what time the parking lot lights go off at this point.

Alderman Papa responded that there's probably a sensor in it or something.

Mr. Walsh responded that it's on a timer and (inaudible).

Alderman McPherson asked if anyone knew the wattage and suggested reducing the wattage.

Mr. Walsh responded that is part of the overall package that is sitting before the Public Improvement Building Committee about the all City audit – so that they can audit all the electrical usage in the city to make a determination if they have the correct wattage bulbs, or if they could they reduce it and still be in the parameters.

Mr. Walsh asked Alan Cameron to discuss what they have done already with re-lamping at Shelton High School.

Mr. Cameron responded that they have done a complete relighting project at Shelton High School and that saved them about \$80K a year in electricity costs. They also revitalized the compressors in the freezers and walk-in refrigerator at the high school which is another savings in the neighborhood of about \$25K a year. Together with the City, they just went out to bid, and the bids were just opened a while ago, for a performance contractor to come in and look at all the City buildings, look at all the roofs to see whether they could be other possibilities, and whether they heat water for their hot water heaters, etc... Over the years, they have investigated absorption chillers and gas-fired turbines at Shelton High School. They've had that information forwarded to the Building Committee with the performance contractor. They selected Johnson Controls

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as their vendor of choice. Now, where that stands is that Johnson Controls has to go out and do a fairly extensive survey of the buildings and come back and give the City a price for a very detailed energy audit. And then the City has to make a decision as to whether or not the outcome is going to be worth the upfront investment. They have been working with the Mayor and Tom Welch to prepare that bid spec. and they've been working with City Hall on procuring electricity and they buy their oil through a state consortium. There are a lot of places where they work cooperatively and they have taken the initiative to minimize the electric and other energy bills.

Chairman Holden stated that the last he knew, the BOE was still buying their electricity from a different supplier than the City was –the City went in with the CCM. Is that going to be changing with this budget?

Mr. Cameron responded that it will change in the middle of next year's budget, but they haven't taken into consideration the cost of ?(inaudible) and haven't gone out to bid yet. They renew for a longer period of time than the City – they have a contract.

Chairman Holden asked for the next question from the Board of A&T or the Board of Aldermen.

Charlotte Madar, Board of A&T, asked about grants and if they know how much they've gotten this year so far as grant money and for what.

Mr. Cameron responded that this year was a great year for them because they got a \$900K grant that they had never gotten before. It was a to help them – they are the fiduciary for this region. They are running the grant for Trumbull, Derby and Ansonia. It's a three year grant to help history teachers learn to teach history more effectively and it is in conjunction with Yale and Sacred Heart. That was \$900K, it was a federal grant and it was brand new. It was a big deal - Caroline (inaudible?) worked hard on that, but they don't hire staff with that. It is to help people learn to teach better - after school on their time. It is not aimed at kids, it is aimed at the teachers.

Mr. Burr added that it is a collaborative so there are several districts involved and it's kind of voluntary. They are the administering agent.

Mr. Cameron indicated that the other grants are accounted for in their revenue. And what happened last year, because of the way that the State's budget works, the grants dropped down a little bit.

Charlotte Madar asked where the grants are accounted for in their revenue.

Mr. Cameron responded that they are on Page 12, Section 1.

Charlotte Madar asked if the State is the only place that they can get grants.

Mr. Cameron explained that the first grant on Page 12 is Educational Cost Sharing that goes directly to the City. It is \$4,975,000. They have been told that grant is supposed to increase by \$73K for the City next year but the BOE doesn't see that one. That is an education grant aimed at the City from the State.

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Charlotte Madar asked if the City passes it over to the BOE.

Mr. Cameron responded that it helps reduce the City's \$63M by \$5M. The next grant, the Health Services Grant is a State grant that comes to the City and the City keeps that grant too. But what that is – they pay for nursing services at the non-public schools and this is a reimbursement. But the reimbursement goes to the City not to the BOE.

Mr. Cameron commented that the next one, Custodian Overtime, that isn't pertinent - it is just netted against costs. The next one is Public School Transportation. The City gets a grant of \$191,908 to reimburse some of their transportation expenses. That is really targeted at the transportation expenses that they incur to send kids to the Voags? Aquaculture?, and Platt, Emmett, Bullard Haven – that is what it's intended for. The next one is to help with pupil transportation, non-public \$37K - that's to help reimburse the expenditures that they make to bring the parochial kids to school. However, all those grants stay on the City side. They don't come to the BOE.

Mr. Cameron stated that the next item listed is for Pupil Transportation for the magnet schools. They do get that one - it's \$28K. And that one, as Superintendent Burr said, they may consider not providing magnet school transportation. They are eliminating two buses from their budget next year, and it may be that they aren't going to have the capability to do the magnet school transportation.

Charlotte Madar asked how much more does the transportation cost over the \$28K?

Mr. Burr responded that is what they have to determine. If they cut out the magnet school transportation and they are saving more money than the reimbursement, then it comes off their bottom line. The only way that this is practical is if it equals out.

Mr. Cameron indicated that the next one is the Federal Grants. These are the grants that enable them to hire staff. There is \$1,525,000 worth of those. The biggest piece of that is aimed at special ed. The biggest grant that they get is the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act Grant and that is aimed at special education.

Mr. Cameron stated that there is a cliffhanger in this – the Feds have increased some of these grants. The Feds gave the State money to give to them to keep people employed, so some of these grants are going to remain the same for this year and next year. He added that these grants, right here, will likely decrease the following year because the Feds are taking away the stimulus component.

Mr. Cameron indicated that the Excess Cost Reimbursement is the one that they had been talking about. First, he would need to talk about the Early Reading Success, which is a competitive grant – and for ten years they were won that grant. It was mostly \$107K until it became \$82,500. They ran a summer school program at Lafayette, this summer because they believed that this grant was going to be in place. On October 4th, they learned that, as a result of the budget reconciliation that they had in Hartford, they had put a line through that grant. So, although they had spent the money running a summer reading program at Lafayette, the Governor put a line through it and they were left holding the bag for \$82,500.

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Alderman Papa asked if they anticipated - if they thought they were going to get that money.

Mr. Cameron responded yes, they anticipated they would get the money.

Mr. Burr indicated that also, because everyone has heard about the deficit being counted this year, that \$82K was mitigated as soon as they found out they didn't get the money. So when they hear about the deficit being counted this year, that \$82K was already taken care of.

Mr. Cameron indicated that the next one, Special Ed Cost Reimbursement is \$850K. Last year that was \$1.2M. The advice that the State has given them is that it will be diminished next year. And that is part of the problem that they had. They talk to other people who work at the State Department and at this time last year they asked how their budget looked. They said it looks like it is going to get funded. They had always worked together on this, so on the basis of that, they were just as surprised when some of this stuff was reduced in the reconciliation.

Mr. Walsh stated that the money was in there in the July 1st budget that was still being proposed – it wasn't until the October vote, which was after they had operated the program that they deleted the money from their budget.

Mr. Burr added that they had also hired some support staff with that so they basically had to take on those costs themselves.

Charlotte Madar asked if there were any grants that they applied for that they didn't get through some grant writing.

Mr. Cameron responded that they don't have a grant writer but people apply for grants fairly regularly and they get some, and some they don't get.

Mr. Burr commented that they have to be careful when they apply for large grants because if they apply for large grants, they would need more staff. Once they hire that staff, when that grant goes away, they encumber those costs in future years. So it is more important for them to be selective, and make sure when they are looking at a grant that it is going supported. They did sign on for the Race To The Top money which they may be aware, Connecticut is not funding in the first go round. So, eventually, if they are funded in the second go-round, there may be some money for Shelton. If they don't, they will be able to take that money and continue to develop some of the initiatives that they are trying to move forward in the district but it won't come with staff costs so they'll be able to do professional development, curriculum development and all those kinds of things that will enhance what they do in Shelton. They don't want grants that are going to end up building staff.

Mr. Cameron indicated that the other side of it that people don't get very much publicity on is that teachers write grants. Like the Weller Foundation Grant, for example, which might give them \$500 to \$1,000? Teachers write grants like that all the time and sometimes they get them and sometimes they don't, but they are always looking for ways to supplement the resources they have.

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Charlotte Madar asked if they get listed if they do get them.

Mr. Cameron responded no because it goes directly to the teacher and it has to be something for that classroom.

Charlotte Madar asked if that means there is no accounting for it anywhere.

Mr. Cameron responded that there is accounting for it. It is part of the school's student activities funds and it is audited but it doesn't come through (inaudible).

Chairman Holden wanted to get back to these sheets, and this isn't necessarily specifically about Shelton, but in looking over this list, he sees that when they get to grade 10 on both the State level and in Shelton, the percentage goes way down. He asked why that is.

Mr. Burr responded that when they are testing kids in Grades 3-8, they are testing them on a continuum and the curriculum is kind of wrapped around that because it is aimed at the standards. When they get to the high school, freshman are not tested; although Dr. Smith and her Staff issues a CAPT assessment that they give 9th graders to help to define the core academics to address that. It is a problem state wide as they can see. It is also a very rigorous assessment. It is very challenging for their students – much more challenging than the CMT's. He won't say that they are doing poorly, but they could do better with the goal indicators simply because when they look at their proficiency rates which is really what determines what their AYP status is – they are over 80 and in some areas 85 and 87 percent proficient, but it is an area that they are aware of.

Mr. Burr stated that he wanted to remind everyone that last year, they had the fire at the high school which really kind of shifted the focus because it was so disruptive to the efforts of the entire staff. Just getting through that successfully was a challenge. He thinks that Beth, her administrative team and the leadership team that she has at the school has worked hard to poise themselves to address these areas. He thinks that they are going to have to wait until they get the results in before they see a difference, but his expectation is that they are going to see Shelton start to rise in these areas because they are using 9th grade practice CAP data in order to determine what they have to focus on in the 9th – 10th grade curriculum before kids take the State assessment.

Chairman Holden asked if there were any other questions from either the Board of A&T or the Board of Aldermen.

Judd Crawford, Board of A&T, indicated that he started reading their goals on Page 2 and under Facilities. He referenced #5 – it shall be the goal of the Board to create a plan for the use of Lafayette facility for the 2010-2011 school year. Then when he went back to Section 4 with a breakdown of the items under the infrastructure – gas, water, electric were all cut 100%. Of course, Mr. Burr answered the question. But when is Lafayette going to be closed and what is Lafayette going to be used for.

Mr. Burr responded that this is a good question and very timely. He had his second meeting with the Valley Regional Adult Education Program on Friday. One of the things that they are looking to do since their utility costs - and all of the Board members aren't aware of this so he wanted to apologize - their costs there, if they were to staff it with a

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full time custodian are about \$210K to \$220K. So they are looking at a way to keep that facility open that would also allow them to offset the utility costs.

End of Tape 1B 8:35 p.m

Mr. Burr indicated that ironically, with the Valley Regional Adult Ed Program, if they use public space, they can not pay rent or pay utilities. So he thinks that is a little bit interesting in this era of trying to find cost savings; however, what they are looking at, and it is very premature, they probably do want to have some conversations with the Aldermen as well as the Mayor. They are trying to find a way they can bring in educational related services to that building that would offset the utility costs – and if they could keep that building open, not look for any income, but basically offset the costs there. The opportunity that would provide them, is that they could begin to look at an alternative program for the high school because at the high school they have some students who are over-age and under-credited so can they create a smaller school model that would also be located where adult ed is, provide some staffing there, small groups to try to have students catch up but there would still be opportunity for students to move.

The second piece of that is currently when they provide any alternative education services to a student, mandated by law who may be expelled, they have to do that in a public place. They think it would be much more effective if they were bringing their students into a school facility where they would be getting tutoring. They think it would generate some cost savings because currently they hire a tutor for each individual. They could bring in students, staff it with a tutor, and provide the services that are required under the law and utilize the facility and generate a better service model for their students.

Alderman Papa commented this is the Alternative Ed which they had before in the old Ripton School that they closed down.

Mr. Burr responded that wasn't him, but...

Alderman Papa commented, well that was closed down. So, now they want to open it up?

Mr. Burr responded that actually what they are looking to do and there is a little bit of different model. This would not be an exclusive special education setting. This would be a setting that could be for students with disabilities as well as regular education students who are maybe over-age, behind on their credits, and this is an opportunity to try to provide support. The first thing that they have to figure out is if there is a way for them to make the building facility work so Judson, he believes that's what they are trying to do.

Chairman Holden asked if they were looking at substance abuse as a possible population on this.

Mr. Burr responded that they have talked to TEAM...

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Mr. Cameron added that they've talked to Valley Regional Adult TEAM and the Workplace – they don't know all the constituencies all of them they serve.

Alderman Papa asked if they would open that up to people also from out of town so that they could make some money on this particular situation or is it only going to be for people in Shelton.

Mr. Burr asked if he could be a little more specific.

Alderman Papa responded that if there were other kids from different towns that don't have an alternative ed program.

Mr. Burr commented that he thinks what they would have to do first, because he doesn't want to get them to get too far ahead of themselves, because right now they don't have a model created. He does believe, if an opportunity to create a model is there, then obviously, with Derby; since they have a Regional Adult Ed that included Derby, Seymour, Ansonia and Monroe – there might be opportunities for that.

Alderman Papa stated that it could pay for itself like the old Ripton School used to.

Mr. Burr responded that he didn't want to classify it as Ripton because it would be a multi-faceted community; ideally, if they could make some money out it. He didn't want to get too far ahead of himself, because the first thing they have to do is create a model that would provide effective services for kids. Once they have a model that will, they can look at the opportunity to bring in other towns. He knows some people who would probably be interested in that, and then it could be a money maker.

Alderman McPherson commented that it's definitely worth sitting and discussing as a way to use that building.

Mr. Burr responded that it is still in the very premature stages but they appreciate the fact that they feel that way because they think it is a good thing for everyone. He hopes that answered the question. In regard to the other sheet Judd just held up, he added that it shows the possible costs if they had to winterize the building.

Judd Crawford stated that his only thought is that in going back quite a few years when the BOE closed down Sunnyside School and within 4 – 5 years they came back and asked for the school to be reopened – and he knows it cost \$1.8M then to bring it up to code which would cost a lot more in today's economy.

Mr. Burr responded that they think it would be prudent if they could find a way to keep the building open and have the costs that are incurred there offset, without necessarily be a money maker right now, but just being able to offset and then look for future opportunities. They think that would be a prudent thing to do and an effective use of a facility for those very reasons. Then if they need space in the future, they would have space that they could access.

Mr. Walsh stated that they really thought that Valley Regional Adult Ed could move in there. They are down in the Conte Building now and they are paying rent. They knew

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that they couldn't charge them rent, but they thought they could pay the custodial services and the energy costs.

Alderman Papa indicated that they are going to have to justify why they want that building. All of a sudden now there are utility costs, electricity and gas. It's the BOE's building right now. The City doesn't have auspices of it so if they are going to want it – he's sure that they are going to be talking to the Mayor about what their intentions are and how they are going to pay for it.

Mr. Walsh agreed that they don't want to incur additional costs paying for an empty building.

Mr. Burr added that the agencies that they met with are interested in the facility – the only one that can't give them dollars is the Adult Ed.

Judd Crawford had another question under their Goals and Planning, Section 8, it is a goal of the BOE to get prepared for the accreditation of the Shelton High School in 2010. He asked when the last accreditation was and what the results of it were.

Dr. Beth Smith PhD, Headmaster Shelton High School responded that they have it every ten years, so ten years ago was the last accreditation.

Mr. Walsh indicated that it should be changed to 2011 because they postponed it.

Mr. Burr added that they were going to come in the Fall of next year.

Judd Crawford indicated that he had a question under their Fleet Inventory, Section 1, page 11. He stated that he's asking these questions because if he can come up with a way of saving the BOE some money...He asked if Item #6 for the S10 Pick-Up Maintenance, mileage of 126,458, is the same item recorded in last year's budget. He asked if it was still registered and insured.

Mr. Cameron responded that it is not registered and they don't put it on the road. They put gas in tanks and bring it to the vehicle. They only use it for snow plowing the sidewalks at the high school.

Judd Crawford asked about Item #9.

Mr. Cameron responded that it was a pick-up, the same thing.

Judd Crawford asked about Item #13 – last year it was recorded at 96,425. If they check their book, there is a difference there of \$5,908 miles.

Mr. Cameron responded that Jimmy must be driving backwards.

Judd Crawford commented that they indicated there would be a cut in the administration - they said they would be cutting one administrator – he asked what position that would be.

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Mr. Burr responded that they had planned to cut more than one administrator – in Central Office. In the proposed budget they took one position in Central Office because they had to maintain what they had on the special education side which he spoke about before. They are looking at cutting one position and possibly more; however, he is not meeting with the Shelton Administrative Council until next Monday, so he is not comfortable stating here what the possibility of those position eliminations might entail when he hasn't had a direct conversation with the president of the that union.

Chairman Holden commented that means that they don't want to announce to somebody that they are going to lose their job in a public meeting – that is quite understandable. He asked if there were any other questions from the Board of A&T or the BOA. He indicated that they needed to go into capital items.

Faith Hack, Board of A&T, indicated that they had capital items for 2010- 2011 in the amount of \$3.7M having to do with (background noise – inaudible). This is Section 1, Page 9. She stated that the proposed capital, \$3.7M regarding HVAC Systems, updating window systems, roof replacements/reservicing and cafeteria equipment replacements.

Chairman Holden added that these are mostly in line with what has been going on over the recent years as part of a continuing trend to improve energy efficiency and so forth. He asked if anyone had questions on the capital line items.

Judd Crawford asked if they were keeping the priority statuses as #1, #2, and #3. They discussed this last year when they were the same.

Mr. Burr responded that it is their goal to keep priorities up front. This is the plan that Bill Banfe usually prepares. It is consistent, as he said, depending on funding, they likely are going to be moving some of this out over time and maybe concentrating their priorities to generate a cost savings. He knows that Bill prepared this for the budget back in November based on the six year plan but even with the proposal that they made to the City they understood that it would probably need some tweaking.

Chairman Holden asked if there were any other questions on capital items. He indicated that they have already been over the income side of things. With that, Freeman has asked to make a brief closing remark.

Mr. Burr stated that in closing, he would like to say in closing is this. Obviously, he is new, he came in August, and obviously they are trying to reorganize the system in a way which he likes to refer to as organized for effort. In other words, the work and the priorities that they are setting out, they need to work the whole system around that. What he would also say is while the Board has to be supportive of that because he answers to the Board. And his whole leadership team has to be supportive. What he would like to say to them is that to have a truly successful school system, it not only needs to be the BOE the Superintendent and the Superintendent's cabinet and staff, it also means that they need Mayor Lauretti, A&T and the BOA working in the best interests of all of their kids. He is hopeful that if they have questions or concerns related to the budget that they will generate those to them. He will commit to them that they will return emails, they will return phone calls. He urged them to feel free set up a time to

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visit. It is their goal to work collaboratively with the City moving forward in the best interest of the kids and their families. He thanked everyone for their time.

Chairman Holden stated that as his closing remark, he reminded everyone that this is in fact a horrible year for a tax increase so they are going to have to try to be creative. In terms of science things, he is an avid amateur astronomer and his Astronomical Society is thrilled to work with kids if they would like – he's gone into classrooms in both Trumbull and Ansonia – to work with teachers to make science more fun. And he is free which fits their budget.

Adjournment

He thanked everyone and he hopes everybody agrees that it has been a productive evening. Chairman Holden adjourned the meeting at 8:55 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Karin C. Tuke

Clerk, Board of Apportionment and Taxation
Tapes (2) on File with the City Town Clerk's Office.