

**MINUTES OF CHESHIRE BOARD OF EDUCATION BUSINESS MEETING
HELD IN TOWN COUNCIL CHAMBERS ON JANUARY 19, 2023 AT 7:30 PM**

Board Members Present: Adam Grippo-Vice Chair; Anne Harrigan-Secretary; Faith Ham, Andrew Martelli, Samantha Rosenberg, Timothy White

Board Members Absent: Anthony Perugini-Chair

Administrators Present: Jeffrey F. Solan, Ed.D., Superintendent of Schools; Vincent Masciana, Chief Operating Officer, Marlene Silano, Assistant Superintendent of Schools

1. CALL TO ORDER – 7:30 P.M.

- A. Roll for Quorum. The roll was called and a quorum was determined.
- B. Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag of the United States of America.
Mr. Grippo led the group in the Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag.
- C. Student Representatives. Monica Ghaly and Michael DeJoseph, student representatives for the 2022/2023 school year, reported on recent and upcoming events at Cheshire High School including the holiday concert and Winterguard performance. Midterms are beginning and members of Link Crew and SCOPE to tutor any students who request help have offered midterm prep. There will be a Supermarket Challenge at Shop-Rite in Wallingford, led by the Peer Health Group. Dr. Solan met with a group of students to discuss social emotional learning. Michael reported that a great deal of money is spent repairing bathroom vandalism. He and other students are making a video to encourage an end to the vandalism. He outlined activities that are planned. Track and field student, Colin Brown recently beat his own record in the 55-meter dash in 6.42 seconds. The CHS Mock Trial going to playoffs for the first time in a long time. Board members thanked the students for their report and thanked Michael for his efforts to stop the vandalism.

2. AUDIENCE

None.

3. REPORTS OF STANDING COMMITTEES

A. FINANCE

I. Finance Report

Mr. Masciana said that despite some of the challenges of inflation and costs for electricity, heat and energy, it has been a relatively mild winter. We still are holding about 50% of our budget funds for non-payroll expenditures in reserve, as we normally would be doing at this time of year, we are about halfway through the year. Therefore, we will keep that going until we get into February.

II. Medical Benefits Report

The claims for the month of December did come from November, which unfortunately was a record, all time high of \$1.6 million. December's claims were \$1.1 million, about \$100,000 over the \$1 million expected per month. We did receive some stop loss and prescription rebates during the month. Those rebate and stop loss reimbursements actually helped increase the fund reserve balance by \$171,000, ending the month of December with a reserve balance of 884,000, which is about .8 months of claims reserves. We would like to be at about two months of claims reserves, so we are beneath that. As we hit January, the new HSA plan year begins and employee deductibles reset so claims should be lower.

The Board discussed the electrical rates. Mr. Masciana said we do not currently have a locked-in rate. Beginning in February there will be a locked in rate of about 12 cents.

III. Report on 2023/24 Budget Meetings

Mr. Grippo reported that the Superintendent presented his budget to the Board. The request is for \$\$85,872,591, a 6.46 percent increase of \$5,208,171 over the current budget. They held the first budget review meeting where they reviewed Employee Salaries and Benefits. Dr. Harrigan noted that our community is growing and that is part of the reason for the increase. Ms. Ham said she understands the community is growing but most of the request is beyond their control, it is for salaries and benefits and for mandates.

Mr. White asked what happens if we go negative in the Medical Benefits Account. Mr. Masciana said we could reserve our expenditures or request funds from the Town Council. He said if we did go negative, it would be because of a large claim and then we would receive reimbursements from the stop-loss insurance. Dr. Solan said we are closely monitoring the account.

B. LEGISLATIVE

I. Report on Meeting Held January 12, 2023

Mr. White reported that the Committee met to discuss possible requests of the legislature. They brought forward a list of six items requested by the Superintendent.

Dr. Solan noted the items we submitted are listed on the website. Mr. Grippo added the biggest point of discussion was the Right to Read legislation. A point made was that no Boards of Education were not brought to the table when the discussions were taking place. The Board discussed meeting with Legislators earlier in the year.

C. **PLANNING**

I. **Report on Meeting Held January 19, 2023.**

Mr. Martelli reported that the Committee met this evening to begin their review of the five-year Capital Plan. This year is different because they know what projects will be done. They also started looking into existing facilities and hired a consultant to look at space needs.

D. **POLICY**

I. **Report on Meeting Held January 10, 2023.**

Mr. Grippo reported that at the meeting the Committee discussed policies for a second and third reading.

II. **Second Reading of Policies**

Mr. Grippo reported that they moved #0025 Strategic Goals-Performance Standards and #4112.8/4212.8 Nepotism: Employment of Relatives forward for a second reading. There were not changes since the first reading

III. **Third Reading and Approval of Policies**

Mr. Grippo reported the Committee voted to move policy #5141.213 Administering Medications forward for a third reading.

MOTION by Mr. Grippo, seconded by Ms. Rosenberg

***MOVED** that the Cheshire Board of Education give a third and final reading to Policy #5141.213 Administering Medication - Opioid Overdose Prevention (Emergency Administration of Naloxone) and direct the Superintendent to put said policy into immediate effect.*

VOTE: *The Motion passed unanimously, 6-0.*

E. **OTHER STANDING COMMITTEES**

None.

4. **APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

MOTION by Ms. Ham, seconded by Mr. Martelli.

***MOVED** that the Cheshire Board of Education approve the minutes from meetings held on December 15 2022 and January 12, 2023.*

VOTE: The Motion passed unanimously 6-0.

5. **CORRESPONDENCE**

There was no correspondence.

6. **SUPERINTENDENT'S REPORT**

Dr. Solan reported that earlier this week, he attended the Economic Development Council meeting. It was a very productive meeting where they discussed how to propel a symbiotic relationship between the Cheshire Public Schools and the business community. He said he looks forward to that group working with the CPS School Business Partnership Committee. The Superintendent reported that we received a state grant to build a greenhouse on the Humiston property next to the existing trailer. Students will use this greenhouse across the district and including Humiston School and it also supports our Food Services Program and allows us to do local farm to table in a community that prides itself on our bedding plants and our greenhouses.

He noted he and some board members would be attending the CAGE Legislative Breakfast.

Dr. Solan gave a brief update on the Next Generation School Building Committee. He commended the volunteers who have been meeting weekly. The Requests for Qualifications (RFQ's) have been sent out for architects for each of the two projects. They are currently receiving clarifying questions from architectural firms about the two projects, and those clarifying addenda are posted to the Town website. They will be evaluating those in the next few weeks and the Town Council will issue contacts. They started to evaluate RFQ's on an Owner's Representative, which will be the next phase. He said the process is moving along pretty well, right now. He thanked Town Manager, Sean Kimball, the Town staff, and the Town Attorney, Jeff D'Onofrio.

Mr. White asked if in regard to the RFP, was their request for qualifications with respect to sustainable construction, history knowledge? Dr. Solan answered that when they actually interview the people, that spoke of that being part of the rating scale. One of the addendum questions being posted is concerning sustainability.

Ms. Ham asked if there will be a basic financial tracker for the townspeople to watch to costs. Dr. Solan said they have not reached that point yet where any funds have been expended.

There was further discussion regarding the Greenhouse grant. Mr. Martelli also shared that he and Dr. Solan have been discussing alternate paths for those students who do not wish to go to college.

7. **OLD BUSINESS**

None.

8. **NEW BUSINESS**

• **Chair Report**

In Mr. Perugini's absence, there was no chair report. Mr. Grippo announced the upcoming meetings.

9. **ADJOURNMENT**

On a motion by Mr. White, and seconded by Mr. Martelli, the meeting was adjourned at 8:44 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Adam Grippo, Board Vice Chair

Attest:

Carol K. Jesensky, Board of Education Clerk

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