

**MINUTES OF BOARD OF EDUCATION FINANCE COMMITTEE MEETING
OF THE WHOLE HELD IN DODD MIDDLE SCHOOL
ON JANUARY 26, 2023 AT 7:00 PM**

Board Members Present: Anthony Perugini-Chair; Adam Grippo-Vice Chair; Anne Harrigan-Secretary, Faith Ham, Andrew Martelli, Samantha Rosenberg, Timothy White (7:23pm)

Board Members Absent: None

Administrators Present: Jeffrey F. Solan, Ed.D., Superintendent of Schools; Vincent Masciana, Chief Operating Officer, Marlene Silano, Assistant Superintendent of Schools; Robin-Anne Carey, Director, Pupil Personnel Services; Mike Woods, Principal-Dodd Middle School; John Perosino, Assistant Principal-Dodd Middle School; Diana Burns, Principal-Chapman Elementary School; Kelly Grillo, Principal-Norton School; Kevin Hanlon, K-8 Curriculum Coordinator; Christina Sherwood, Supervisor of Elementary Special Education; Marie Broadway, Supervisor of Secondary Special Education; Ryan Murphy, Community Engagement Coordinator.

1. CALL TO ORDER – 7:00 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. Perugini led the group in the Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag. He then turned the meeting over to Mr. Grippo, Chair of the Finance Committee.

2. AUDIENCE

None.

3. PUBLIC BUDGET REVIEW AND DISCUSSION REGARDING SUPERINTENDENT’S RECOMMENDED BUDGET

Support Services

		EXPENDED	BUDGET	PROJECTED	RECOMMENDED	CHANGE	% inc/ % dec
		2021/22	2022/23	2022/23	2023/24	(From BGT)	
330	OTHER PROFESSIONAL SERVICES	\$ 891,047	\$ 814,150	\$ 814,150	\$ 880,750	66,600	8.18%
440	RENTALS/LEASES	\$ 270,271	\$ 310,000	\$ 310,000	\$ 314,008	4,008	1.29%
510	PUPIL TRANSPORTATION	\$ 3,461,941	\$ 3,627,790	\$ 3,627,790	\$ 3,732,721	104,931	2.89%
520	PROPERTY INSURANCE	\$ 90,349	\$ 119,384	\$ 119,384	\$ 124,793	5,409	4.53%
521	LIABILITY INSURANCE	\$ 123,120	\$ 135,431	\$ 135,431	\$ 148,181	12,750	9.41%
522	TRANSPORTATION INSURANCE	\$ 38,292	\$ 45,618	\$ 45,618	\$ 48,286	2,668	5.85%
530	TELEPHONE/INTERNET SERVICES	\$ 138,887	\$ 173,000	\$ 173,000	\$ 183,000	10,000	5.78%
531	COMMUNICATIONS	\$ 18,613	\$ 50,037	\$ 50,037	\$ 51,124	1,087	2.17%
580	TRAVEL/CONFERENCE	\$ 51,775	\$ 61,074	\$ 61,074	\$ 61,888	814	1.33%
590	OTHER SERVICES	\$ 209,248	\$ 285,421	\$ 285,421	\$ 292,371	6,950	2.43%
610	OFFICE SUPPLY	\$ 91,723	\$ 85,500	\$ 85,500	\$ 89,665	4,165	4.87%
627	TRANSPORTATION SUPPLY	\$ 402,710	\$ 353,741	\$ 353,741	\$ 402,680	48,939	13.83%
690	OTHER SUPPLY	\$ 7,951	\$ 9,750	\$ 9,750	\$ 9,750	0	0.00%
732	CAPITAL EQUIPMENT	\$ 1,108,555	\$ 875,490	\$ 875,490	\$ 913,652	38,162	4.36%
810	DUES/FEES	\$ 50,934	\$ 60,902	\$ 60,902	\$ 77,344	16,442	27.00%
	SUPPORT SERVICES	\$ 6,955,416	\$ 7,007,288	\$ 7,007,288	\$ 7,330,213	\$ 322,925	4.61%

The request is \$7,330,213, a 4.61% increase for this category. The largest item in this category is Transportation, Fuel and Insurance that accounts for \$4,183,687 or 57% of the Support Services request. The budget increase for this item is 2.89%. He noted they will be negotiating a new contract with Dattco at the end of this year. He reviewed cost saving initiatives such as consolidating bus routes. The next bus contract, effective July 2024, will contemplate migration to alternative fuel buses to meet the 2040 deadline for a zero-emission fleet.

Regarding Technology, SMART Interactive Flat Panel upgrades are 60% complete districtwide. There are continuing efforts to keep our PC's and technology hardware current, no devices over 6 years of age with 75% of the devices are under 4-years old. The rollout of the Motorola radio system, in conjunction with the Town and Police Department, is complete with 218 radios for Cheshire Public School and a base station in each office. In addition, work continues with Apex on an Incident Response Plan, as well as, a disaster recovery/business resumption plans if faced with a cyber-event.

Maintenance and Operations

		EXPENDED	BUDGET	PROJECTED	RECOMMENDED	CHANGE	% inc/
		2021/22	2022/23	2022/23	2023/24	(From BGT)	% dec
410	PUBLIC UTILITIES	\$ 1,060,512	\$ 1,112,893	\$ 1,112,893	\$ 1,268,748	155,855	14.00%
420	MAINTENANCE/REPAIR EQUIPMENT	\$ 89,477	\$ 153,700	\$ 153,700	\$ 156,300	2,600	1.69%
430	MAINTENANCE/REPAIR BUILDINGS	\$ 2,584,232	\$ 2,095,876	\$ 2,095,876	\$ 2,299,931	204,055	9.74%
613	MAINTENANCE SUPPLY	\$ 479,682	\$ 267,450	\$ 267,450	\$ 287,375	19,925	7.45%
620	HEAT/ENERGY	\$ 522,691	\$ 391,418	\$ 391,418	\$ 524,700	133,282	34.05%
	MAINTENANCE & OPERATIONS	\$ 4,736,594	\$ 4,021,337	\$ 4,021,337	\$ 4,537,054	\$ 515,717	12.82%

Mr. Masciana explained that Utilities and Heating accounts for 39.5% of the Maintenance budget. This category is increasing by 14% due to fuel prices. Building Maintenance and Repairs is 60.5% of the Maintenance Budget. Mr. Masciana said our aged infrastructure needs appropriate funding.

Mr. Masciana reviewed the Capital Budget. He said the Planning Committee is working on this budget. Some of the larger areas in the plan, where they know they need investments, will include HVAC improvements, window replacements, and district site work including paving, roofing, sidewalk and masonry improvements and district cafeteria improvements. He said they are hoping the HVAC grants from the state will continue.

Mr. Masciana noted that the Building Maintenance CNR Fund, a special type of reserve fund and not an operating budget account, contains a \$233,627 balance. Town Council approval is required for its use.

Board members asked clarifying questions regarding Mr. Masciana's presentation. With respect to bathroom vandalism as discussed, at a recent Board of Education meeting, Mr. Grippo suggested some type of electronic access system. Dr. Solan responded that it

would be difficult because there are no entry doors on the high school bathrooms. He said he is proud of the student's initiatives to try to solve the problem themselves.

4. SUPERINTENDENT'S SUMMARY OF RECOMMENDED BUDGET AND RESPONSE TO QUESTIONS.

Mr. Masciana and Dr. Solan responded to some of the Board member's questions from previous meetings. Mr. Masciana gave examples of new equipment and replacement equipment per Ms. Ham's question. Examples of purchased items from these accounts include gym mats and vaulting boards, science lab tables, round tables, student desks, teacher desks, desk chairs, triangle desks, kindergarten furniture and classroom supplies, archery equipment, storage cabinets, space dividers, podium for graduation, classroom rug, file cabinets, new kiln, project adventure ropes, basketballs, whiteboards, art classroom tables, musical instruments, power plinth table, basketball backboard, basketballs and a defibrillator

Dr. Solan said regarding the 66 students enrolled with IEPs between 2021 and 2022, he reported 26 students came from Darcey. Only 40 of the newly enrolled to Cheshire over that year receive special education services (15.3%). That is higher than our prevailing rate by about 2%. He noted that enrolling 262 new students in a year is exceptionally high.

Regarding future staffing needs, Dr. Solan said that if we maintained our recent average of 18.1 students per elementary teacher next year, we would need to add two elementary teachers positions. The middle school remains on the threshold for additional positions and the high school remains at status quo. He reviewed that we have decreased staff at a rate of 1 certified teacher per every 30.2 students declined in enrollment (2014-2021) in spite of adding special education programming. In the last two years, we did not cut teachers at that ratio due to the Cheshire High School schedule shift.

Dr. Solan reported that Cheshire's per pupil expenditure for special education students is \$34,301 versus \$16,298 for general education students.

Dr. Solan noted that like the Cheshire community, our schools are growing and our budget is dedicated to maintaining the same level of service in spite of increased enrollment. He reviewed that the budget drivers are enrollment, medical benefits, energy prices and mill rate offsets. Mr. Martelli added that there are about 700 housing units across the town that have been approved

5. PUBLIC DISCUSSION REGARDING SUPERINTENDENT'S RECOMMENDED BUDGET.

None.

6. BOARD REVIEW REGARDING SUPERINTENDENT'S RECOMMENDED BUDGET.

Discussions continued regarding future staffing needs, enrollment and grant revenues. Board members thanked Dr. Solan and Mr. Masciana for all of their work on this budget and for answering all of their questions. Chairman Perugini encouraged members of the public to send questions.

7. POSSIBLE ACTION REGARDING 2023/24 PROPOSED BOARD OF EDUCATION BUDGET.

Mr. Perugini announced that there would be no action this evening. The Finance Committee and Board would be meeting next week to take action on the budget.

8. ADJOURNMENT

On a motion by Ms. Ham, and seconded by Mr. Grippo, the meeting was adjourned at 9:25 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Anthony Perugini, Board Chair

Attest:

Carol K. Jesensky, Board of Education Clerk

Filed at the Town Clerk's Office, Town Hall, Cheshire: 3/27/2023.

Minutes of the Finance Committee of the Whole Meeting

January 26, 2023

Page 5

		EXPENDED	BUDGET	PROJECTED	RECOMMENDED	CHANGE	% inc/ % dec
		2021/22	2022/23	2022/23	2023/24	(From BGT)	
410	PUBLIC UTILITIES	\$ 1,060,512	\$ 1,112,893	\$ 1,112,893	\$ 1,268,748	155,855	14.00%
420	MAINTENANCE/REPAIR EQUIPMENT	\$ 89,477	\$ 153,700	\$ 153,700	\$ 156,300	2,600	1.69%
430	MAINTENANCE/REPAIR BUILDINGS	\$ 2,584,232	\$ 2,095,876	\$ 2,095,876	\$ 2,299,931	204,055	9.74%
613	MAINTENANCE SUPPLY	\$ 479,682	\$ 267,450	\$ 267,450	\$ 287,375	19,925	7.45%
620	HEAT/ENERGY	\$ 522,691	\$ 391,418	\$ 391,418	\$ 524,700	133,282	34.05%
	MAINTENANCE & OPERATIONS	\$ 4,736,594	\$ 4,021,337	\$ 4,021,337	\$ 4,537,054	\$ 515,717	12.82%