Chairman Mark Holden called the Special Meeting of the Board of Education to order at 5:05 p.m.

Roll Call:
Mark Holden, Chairman
Thomas Minotti, Vice Chairman
Arlene Liscinsky, Secretary
David Gioiello
Faith Hack

Kate Kutash
Win Oppel (via Skype)
Darlisa Ritter
Kathleen Yolish

Full Quorum

Board of Education Administration present: Superintendent of Schools, Christopher Clouet; Finance Director, Dominic Barone; Human Resources Director, Carole Pannozzo

(1 tape on file in City/Town Clerk’s office)

The Pledge of Allegiance was recited.

Thomas Minotti moved to approve the agenda; motion seconded by Arlene Liscinsky and passed unanimously.

Chairman Mark Holden stated the only items that can be discussed are those on the agenda, as this is a Special Meeting. He gave some opening remarks reflecting on last year’s budget request. He noted that Shelton outperforms most other districts in Connecticut and spends less on a per student basis than 94% of those districts, yet we would still be ranked in the bottom 14% of districts for per pupil spending had we received our full request last year. Mr. Holden said the Mayor has been re-elected and his primary campaign promise to hold the line on taxes makes it unlikely he will increase the mill rate. While we’ve heard a lot of good ideas for how to improve our educational system, we need to bear that in mind. Any increase in our budget needs to be funded from the portion of the growth of the grand list and growth in the Educational Cost Sharing funds from the State. He said before we look at what we’d like to do, we need to determine what it’s going to cost to do what we must do.

Superintendent Clouet said this is a very early step in the process of developing a budget. This meeting is not to vote on final action items or to make final decisions but is a discussion of where we are based on current programming as well as requests made by administrators. Dr. Clouet emphasized that tonight’s focus is on personnel. He noted that some of the positions that are currently in our budget and some of the proposed FTE positions advocated for next year are based on mandates. He said many, if not most, of the mandates that will be discussed reflect law and reflect our obligation to comply with the law.
Board members were previously provided a copy of position requests and were asked to indicate rank and priority. Dominic Barone presented a document summarizing the responses and explained that it was a first pass for basis of discussion. Dr. Elizabeth Hannaway was asked to review the federal/state mandated services for special needs students and the impact on the district, resulting in requests for 6 additional Special Education Teachers; 2 TESOL Teachers; 5 Special Education Tutors; 1 Speech Language Pathologist; and a .5 Social Worker. There was brief mention of using interns to alleviate the costs but recognition that there is still a cost to us and limitations as to what interns can do. Consensus was that mandates cannot be disputed and we must comply.

There was discussion about the negativity of the term “mandate” and Dr. Clouet said he would consider alternate wording.

The additional position requests were discussed.

- **4 Assistant Principals** – Suggestion was made to reduce to 2 and to look for potential candidates from within the ranks. Alternative ideas were to use Administrative Interns; assign floating Assistant Principals; half-time Teacher/half-time Assistant Principal. Discussion concerning responsibilities of Principals led to testimony from two elementary teachers, Kristen Santilli and Amy Yost. *(Note: Tape 1; Side B @ 6:05 p.m.)* Chairman Holden said there is a lot of information to be considered and, in consideration of time, suggested the topic needs to be discussed at a separate meeting. Carole Pannozzo stated that in considering reassigning duties to another individual who is a member of a union, that reassignment must be negotiated.

- **2 Clerical/Secretarial for Facilities and Curriculum Departments** – There was support for both positions but question of part-time or full-time. Carole Pannozzo stated there is a current list of eligible applicants for full-time; the criteria for part-time is different and once hired cannot be elevated to full-time.

- **1.6 Library Media Specialist** – It has been a goal of the board to have one in every school. Discussion of use of library media centers as Centers for Learning of all different kinds including intellectual development, including technical skills like keyboarding. There was consensus for significant support of position as a relatively inexpensive means of improving student achievement.

- **2 Teachers grades 5-6** – Current class size of 23-24 would be reduced to 22. It was noted that classroom population has increased as a result of a larger special education population.

- **1.5 Math Specialist** – There was discussion of funding received from Supplemental Title 1 and 2A Funds 2015-2016 for current positions. Testing results are needed to indicate how well the Math Specialist support is going in order to justify the need to hire. Low math scores across the state, including Shelton, indicated that extra support is necessary. Expectation is that our Specialists will be grant funded again next year. There is an additional hire for 2015-2016 that will be grant funded.
• **Guidance/School Counselor** – Discussion of role counselors play with the general social skill curriculum and the implementation across the district, as well as the evolvement of the role of counselor.

• **Interventionists in Math and ELA (new positions)** – Dr. Clouet commented that based on the Common Core standards and the kinds of tests being required of our students, the ability to intervene where students are struggling is helpful and the board should decide if this will be a priority moving forward.

• **Non-Certified Technology Personnel** – A large amount of computers have been added to the district, warranting the need for additional support. Dan DiVito explained the need is for an entry-level position requiring technology experience but not high-level server infrastructure experience. While there is grant funding for technology, there are no grants available to fund the personnel side of technology. Outsourcing has been reviewed and is too costly. Hiring even one person would reduce the current wait time of 200-300 hours per work order by 100 hours. It was suggested to include the full request.

• **.5 Reading Consultant (Intermediate School)** – There was a question about the ratio of current staffing to students. The requested need is required to support the SBI Model and reduce the ratio for services.

• **.5 Security for Long Hill** – Kristen Santilli stated there is no vestibule/entryway, and parents are very vocal concerning the security at the school. The position could be a security guard.

• **2 Teacher-Leader Stipends (new positions)** – Not full FTE, negotiations with the union will be required for these stipends. Dollar figure not given due to needs, specifically in technology. Enticement for teacher to take position, as it is a leadership role.

• **Administrative Intern (Mohegan)** – As a result of transfer of teacher to ESS, Mohegan is in need of replacement. Funding is still in budget for administrative interns, so it requires funding $2,500 additional for one position.

(Nota: Tape 2; Side A @ 7:07 p.m.)

Dominic Barone will re-order the positions based on the narrative with mandated items as first order of priority, followed by high-priority items, etc. The next meeting will be held on Tuesday, January 12, at 5:30 p.m.

Chairman Holden adjourned the meeting at 7:13 p.m.

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**Diane Luther**  
*Diane Luther*  
*Secretary to Board of Education*  
*January 13, 2016*