

**SHELTON BOARD OF EDUCATION
SPECIAL MEETING
Board of Education Administrative Offices
382 Long Hill Avenue
Board Room**

BUDGET WORKSHOP

January 9, 2019

Chairman Mark Holden called the Special Meeting of the Board of Education to order at 6:34 p.m.

Roll Call:

Mark Holden, Chairman
Thomas Minotti, Vice Chairman
Kate Kutash, Secretary
Anne Gaydos
David Gioiello

José Goncalves
Amanda Kilmartin
Darlisa Ritter
Kathleen Yolish

Full Quorum

Board of Education Administration present: Christopher Clouet, Superintendent of Schools; Lorraine Rossner, Assistant Superintendent; Ed Drapp, Finance Director; Carole Pannozzo, Human Resources Director

(1 tape on file in Town Clerk's Office)

The Pledge of Allegiance was recited.

Chairman Holden explained that instead of having an evening dedicated to public hearing, we will have public comments at the start and again at the end of each of our meetings to allow anyone in the audience to make comments.

Approval of Agenda

Thomas Minotti moved to approve the agenda; motion seconded by Mandy Kilmartin and passed unanimously.

Public Hearing

No one from the public spoke.

Budget Discussion

Superintendent Clouet explained this Workshop #1 is designed to be an overview with some discussion. In subsequent meetings we will get into the details, many of which are provided tonight to review for future discussion in terms of specific details proposed to us by the administrative leadership team. That team consists of principals and program directors, who for many years have felt underfunded in relationship to comparable districts and have asked for additional materials and, in some cases, staffing to meet the learning goals of our children. Our overarching goal as a district is to make Shelton Public Schools one of the top 25% schools as measured by our SBAC and SAT scores. In order to do it, we need to build our team a little

further, and that is what we are going to discuss in the next several sessions. He discussed documents in the packet relative to DRGs and a comparison of staffing in various district central offices in the state. Mrs. Yolish asked Dr. Clouet to provide enrollment information for each district.

Ed Drapp gave a PowerPoint presentation and summarized three-year historical data of budget to actual expenditures, noting areas that were adjusted requiring significant additional funding (Student Transportation, Heat & Utilities, Building & Equipment Services, BOE Support Services).

There was discussion of the Mayor's letter copied to the Board regarding a concern about electricity usage at the high school. Subsequently, Dr. Clouet had a lengthy conversation with a vendor (Jay Polidis) who inquired if we were interested in more energy saving programs, which is typically something the City signs off on. He is anticipating a callback from the vendor. Ed Drapp said it takes money to save money, so we would have to invest in retrofitting the building (lights, motors) at a substantial cost. There are limited periods when incentive money is available, but it's not as forthcoming as in the past.

Mr. Drapp stated the year ended with a surplus of \$73,805 mainly due to an encumbrance for \$61,000 for a time and attendance system, as well as some other small encumbrances that were not used by the time the auditors conducted their review. They did not make any adjustments other than closing out some open encumbrances mid-December. Superintendent Clouet stated we are audited every year by a company chosen by the City, and the result is they see the money is managed quite well.

Ed Drapp explained our zero-based budget and said the documents in the binder are as requested by the principals, curriculum leaders, and program directors and will have adjustments. He stated there will be transparency throughout the budget process, and board members and the public will be made fully aware of the specific impact of any adjustments. David Gioiello asked for the status of redistricting and whether principals based their requests on current data. Dr. Clouet responded the requests are based on current data, but principals are very much aware of potential changes due to redistricting. While we don't expect it to have a huge impact; certainly crowded schools are expecting to have fewer students and the less crowded schools are anticipating having more students. There was discussion of textbooks and the past practice of the district always funded the books for the first year of new courses. Superintendent Clouet said it is a great practice and hopes we can afford it. He said the Mayor and John Anglace requested a list of textbooks and technology needs that the City may be able provide help to us.

Ed Drapp credited Kathy Hudak for working closely with him to prepare and assemble the budget books and noted there are blank pages for notes.

There was general discussion and board member questions. Superintendent Clouet stated the elementary principals, Teaching & Learning, and Technology will be present to answer any questions at the next meeting on January 16. Secondary principals, Special Education and Athletics will attend on January 30, and the plan is to vote on a proposed budget at that time. He encouraged board members, as they review the document between now and our next meeting to pose questions and concerns prior to the meeting, so information can be made available. There was further discussion about projection for workers compensation and health insurance.

Public Hearing

Debbie Keller asked for and received confirmation that in order to fund the 2.8% for salary increases, the budget would have to be increased by 2.8% or cut something else to make up for it. Judson Crawford asked if there has been any change from the State of Connecticut in reference to teacher retirements. Superintendent Clouet said there has been some discussion at the State that there may be a proposal coming from Governor Lamont's office to start the process of shifting the liability for teacher retirement to towns. A parent of an RCA student talked about parent funding for transportation and pay to participate and whether there will be any effort to change that. Dr. Clouet commented that would be up to the board; and, if we get the same level of municipal support that we've gotten in the past, those things would remain. David Gioiello recommended our initial budget request should be based on no parent funding.

In response to a suggestion by Mandy Kilmartin, Dr. Clouet said there will be a spreadsheet displayed on screen at the next meeting to be able to make changes and look at different scenarios. David Gioiello said the added revenues from parent funding should be factored in. There was further general discussion with agreement that personnel, tuition, utilities, and transportation make up the majority of the budget. Superintendent Clouet stated he is hoping to share with the board soon a letter from the City's attorney regarding the City's plan for transportation. He said we are exploring different ways to save on special education transportation. He recommended the board should consider looking into Connecticut Partnership Plan 2.0 for possible healthcare savings. Kathy Yolish suggested finding a way to show how the investment in full-day kindergarten has paid off, now that we have a three-year growth. Mark Holden agreed and said it speaks to accountability. David Gioiello stated with changes coming to our district, now is the opportune time to look at how we manage central office and structure to possibly find savings. Dr. Clouet will put together some examples of what we do and what other districts do, what alternatives there are and come up with some possible new ideas.

Adjournment

Chairman Mark Holden adjourned the meeting at 7:47 p.m.

Diane Luther

Diane Luther

Secretary to Board of Education

January 16, 2019