

**SHELTON BOARD OF EDUCATION
SPECIAL MEETING
BOARD OF EDUCATION ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICE
382 LONG HILL AVENUE
JUNE 3, 2010**

Chairman Timothy Walsh called the Special Meeting of the Board of Education to order at 7:07 p.m.

Roll Call: (alpha order)
Paula Ellis (Arrived at 7:12 p.m.)
John Francino-Quinn
Kate Kutash (Excused)
Arlene Liscinsky, Vice Chairman
Thomas Minotti, Secretary
Win Oppel
Mike Pacowta (Excused)
Timothy Walsh, Chairman
Kathleen Yolish

Initial quorum of 6 present, 3 absent; final quorum of 7 present, 2 absent

Board of Education Administration present:
Superintendent of Schools, Freeman Burr
Assistant Superintendent, Lorraine Rossner
Director of Finance, Allan Cameron
Director of Human Resources, Rita McDougald-Campbell
Operations Manager, William Banfe

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

The Board led the Pledge of Allegiance.

Approval of Agenda

Arlene Liscinsky moved to approve the agenda; seconded by Jay Francino-Quinn; vote 6-0; motion passed.

Discussion of Budget

Superintendent Burr referenced the recommendations of the Board last week and Finance Director Allan Cameron's presentation to the Board, which was essentially how to utilize the \$1.2 million in unemployment and what kind of leverage or freedom that gives us. There were about 14 positions restored to the budget including returning the

two housemaster positions, one each at SHS and SIS, returning the Athletic Director position, even though the budget proposal included about \$375,000 pay to participate subsidy for athletics and extracurricular. He stated then there was discussion about potential environmental cleanup for next year relative to the oil tank at ESS; and additionally we were asked to look at discretionary areas, primarily in our maintenance and operations budget with respect to supplies, and also look at our technology budget. In doing so, we found what we believe to be about \$560,000. A small contingency would be left in the building and maintenance line for whatever might happen with respect to environmental cleanup, what it might cost us (although we don't have bids yet) if we have to do a service contract for the systems at SHS, SIS and Perry Hill and also associated with any additional things that might occur, like this year with the oil tank at ESS. We think we can find a total of 21 instructional positions (including last week's number). Allocation of those would be 65% to the elementary schools, particularly the grades that are projected to be 26-31. While it will not approach anywhere near the average 18-22 and there will be exceptional rooms of 22 or 23, for the most part the range will be 24-28 to a classroom by adding these positions. It does give some additional support guidance to SHS and adds some support back to SIS. The downside is a layoff in the range of 51 teachers.

Allan Cameron said the Board voted last week to adopt the recommended budget and discussed how to reallocate the \$1.2 million that was made available to cover our unemployment costs, and we were going to use that primarily to reduce the number of positions that were to be eliminated. We reported that we wanted to use those funds to restore three administrative positions (housemaster at SIS, housemaster at SHS and the Athletic Director). We also planned to restore 10.2 teaching positions and 1 secretarial position. While the Board was happy with that, they also said it was not enough and the priority was to go back and find any available dollars, no matter what those sacred cows may have been in the past, which the building and maintenance has been for years because we've tried to preserve our commitment to keep our buildings in excellent condition and to continually improve the quality of our maintenance and custodial efforts. The same applies to technology...we've always felt like we were on the front end of technology, but the Board told us to go back and see what could be done to reallocate those dollars to restore more teaching positions. Over the last week Bill Banfe and Ken LaCroix worked to find funds within the building and maintenance accounts. We plan to reduce the project account by 50%...that's \$356,000 and will become \$178,000. We will reduce the maintenance and custodial supply account, as well as the contract and service accounts. There will also be some reallocation of personnel. Through all of those efforts, we plan to save another \$200,000. Through the early retirement plan that was worked out with the secretaries union and some reallocation, we have savings of \$50,000 from that line item. Finally, we reallocated \$135,000 available in the technology line item to the salary accounts. As the Superintendent reported, we have reallocated \$563,000 to the salary account to avoid eliminating 11 additional teaching positions. In total, between the efforts of last week

and this week, we will be able to avoid eliminating 3 administrators, 21.2 teaching positions and 1 secretarial position. About 65% of the teaching positions are going to the elementary schools due to class sizes. As a result, class sizes switched from a range of 27-32 to about 24-28; and, as mentioned by the Superintendent, there will be exceptions in some classes. Also restored are guidance services and core instructional areas at SIS and SHS, which account for 35%. Some guidance services are restored at the elementary level. The restored counselor positions are 1 position at Perry Hill; .5 positions at LH, MO and ESS; .5 position split at BH and SS; total of 2 counselors. It was confirmed that there will be 7 counselor positions at SHS (2 per house and 1 in Career Center) meaning there will be 1 layoff. A total of 2 counselors will be laid off at elementary level. Mr. Cameron said efforts continue to find additional savings and more details will be brought to the June 16 meeting of the Finance Committee.

Paula Ellis asked if the teachers know where their assignments will be. Freeman Burr said we are in the process of working those out now; we are working out an arrangement with the Shelton Education Association and our goal is to notify everybody by June 18 at the latest. In reference to the Superintendent's reorganization plan, Mrs. Ellis asked when those interviews would start. Freeman Burr responded the postings are just going out, so the executive position is posted tomorrow; after a final discussion with the Administrative Council, the remaining positions will be posted. We are trying to structure an agreement with the Administrative Council.

Win Oppel commented relative to available class spaces that exist in the elementary schools, due to both the opening of Perry Hill and the loss of some teaching slots, that we may be able to squeeze some further savings out of the maintenance side if we can talk to the principals about allocation of space and trying to keep all of the classrooms at one end or one general area of the building and, therefore, making the cleaning process more efficient.

Kathy Yolish stated she thought if a new position were created with a new job description that it had to be posted. Freeman Burr said we can enter into discussions with the Shelton Administrative Council and try to work out a solution that's amenable to all parties. He further said yes, we do have the right as the Board of Education to post them all, but we're not required to; so if we could reach an agreement without posting, that is also a favorable solution. Paula Ellis asked Freeman Burr if he feels this agreement that he is trying to enter into, because it still has to be a very vague discussion, would be of benefit to the Board of Education dollar-wise or personnel-wise? Mr. Burr responded that the dollars have already been proven; we would be able to remain very much intact in terms of people in positions and would probably be able to create a much more stable environment at SIS and SHS. Kathy Yolish and Paula Ellis questioned the interview process and were told it would be a referral to the Personnel Committee to set the salary and that a Board Member would probably be on the interview committee.

Freeman Burr stated that ARRA and IDEA monies will be set aside in this budget. Unlike this year where there was virtually no discretionary money, we expect to provide services as we implement the scientific research-based intervention for both students with disabilities as well as those with remedial needs. There will be some ancillary dollars that can be used only to hire special education staff, because those monies are totally dedicated for special education. But, he said, as the need arises for tutor services, we will be able to provide those services. We will probably be able to use some of those dollars to staff our student support centers, and that may mean not only having the reading consultant in there along with the special educator, but we may be able to use a couple of tutor staffing positions and reading assistant positions in that support service center. Conceivably, some of that money can be used to provide services for kids based on needs, either kids going through the SAT process or the intervention process, as well as those with disabilities. This year our tutor account was overspent by \$700,000; we will not be in that situation next year, yet we will have discretionary funds as needed to provide for services, which should also give us discretion if we get an unanticipated out-of-district placement for tuition. He said six requests were received today for a new magnet school in Bridgeport, and we are in discussions with the state to determine what our obligation is. The Board has supplied transportation for those programs in the past, but it may have to be looked at, especially if there is no way out of the obligation for tuition...and that will come out of the \$63.1 million. Win Oppel asked when we will know whether we will pay for all the transportation. Freeman Burr said based on the financials from the June meeting, we should have a good idea of the need of that. Win Oppel then asked how much ARRA money we can anticipate in 2010-2011. Allan Cameron said the state has taken some of their ARRA money and used it to supplement the ECS cost money. \$750,000 of our budget for next year, as in this year, will be charged to that, so we will end up under-spending our city budget. The feds determined that by earmarking that money for regular education, they were supplanting their normal effort. They decided to take money away from the regular education transportation grant and reallocated it to the special education excess cost grant; so, theoretically, they were not guilty of not meeting their special education commitments. Allan Cameron said the money is going to go away for special education and ARRA/IDEA; it is also going to go away in the educational cost sharing where the state is supplementing \$750,000 of the \$5 million that they pay with federal money.

Paula Ellis distributed copies of the presentation on pay to participate prepared by John Niski and Dr. Beth Smith based on their research of other towns' plans. Mrs. Ellis explained the Board put in approximately \$557,000 and gave the charge to the Athletic Committee to come up with \$370,000. The plan was discussed at a committee meeting yesterday. Mrs. Ellis reviewed the presentation and outlined the following proposed fees:

- Hockey \$500
- All other sports at SHS \$350
- Any sport at SIS \$200
- Weightlifting \$100

Paula Ellis said the amount charged would be \$700 maximum for multiple children at SIS and SHS or for child/children playing multiple sports. Free lunch students would receive free sports. Reduced lunch students would receive reduced rates for sports. There are currently:

| | |
|--|------------------|
| 253 multiple sports/multiple family members \$700 max..... | \$177,100 |
| 339 single sport/single family members x \$350..... | 118,650 |
| 200 SIS students x \$200..... | 40,000 |
| 75 weightlifters x \$100..... | 7,500 |
| Savings from hockey and other athletic budget cuts..... | <u>30,000</u> |
| | \$373,250 |

Mrs. Ellis noted there was a savings from Hockey by joining a co-op with Staples in Weston. The cost reduced from \$30,000 to \$10,000-\$15,000. There are only seven SHS players with possibly three more from SIS. Staples will be the lead school so there will not be a Gaels team.

It was clarified that there is no charge for groups that meet during the day (enrichment). Co-curriculars such as Marching Band, Color Guard, One Acts, Adaptations, Spring Musical, Pom Pon, and Robotics Competitions will pay a fee. Freshmen sports will not be reduced. Freeman Burr commented that in this scenario no activities will be eliminated at either SIS or SHS. Mrs. Ellis cautioned the Board that once pay to participate is implemented to expect 10-15% drop in participation. In order to try out, money in the form of a cashier's check is required, which would be returned in the event the student does not make the team. Paula Ellis stated most towns started out charging a low fee and gradually increased it, as opposed to our charging the highest fees. Arlene Liscinsky confirmed that Trumbull has charged \$250 per year since 1989. Jay Francino-Quinn asked if there would be any adjustments due to fundraising. Paula Ellis said there would not be, as what the Board gives is totally separate from the booster clubs. Fundraisers cover such things as accessories.

The total revenue projected is:

| | |
|------------------------|------------------|
| Athletics | \$373,250 |
| Co-Curricular | <u>14,500</u> |
| | \$387,750 |
| Free Lunch (40) | (14,000) |
| Reduced Lunch (40) | <u>(7,000)</u> |
| Revised Revenue | \$366,750 |

Mrs. Ellis noted there may be a spike in petitions for Free and Reduced Lunch. She said there has been increased sports participation every year for the last five or six years, so perhaps the increased participation and drop-off will be even.

Paula Ellis said there had been many questions from the public at the Athletic Committee meeting and it had been suggested to increase parking fees as a possible means to raise revenue, which traditionally has been used for security.

Win Oppel pointed out there is no policy in place for pay to participate and Chairman Walsh confirmed the matter will be referred to the Policy Committee to develop a policy that will be further extended by the administrative regulations. Mrs. Ellis agreed to draft a policy and forward it to the Policy Committee.

Chairman Walsh commended the Athletic Committee, John Niski and Dr. Beth Smith for a fine proposal and an excellent presentation by Paula Ellis.

Discussion of Redistricting Plan and Final Recommendations

Lorraine Rossner noted that Plan 1A has been posted on our website for three months. She presented detailed information about the project objectives and amendments to the plan including possible neighborhood changes resulting in new elementary school attendance totals as follows:

| | Previous Totals <u>With Changes</u> | New <u>Totals</u> |
|------------|--|----------------------|
| Booth Hill | 367 – 5 | 362 |
| E. Shelton | 505 – 25 | 480 |
| Long Hill | 379 + 25 + 21 | 425 |
| Mohegan | 453 + 5 | 458 |
| Sunnyside | 250 | 250 |

Ms. Rossner stated adoption of the plan will enable us to generate accurate attendance zones which are necessary to create attendance lists and then bus runs. With regard to bus runs, she said it is the objective to have all the elementary schools on the third tier, Perry Hill and SIS on the second tier, and SHS, parochial and technical schools will remain unchanged on the first tier.

(Note: Tape 1, Side B – 8:10 p.m.)

Chairman Walsh said in this process we will save two buses at approximately \$90,000. A tremendous amount of work has to begin to input information to computers to generate the bus runs.

Win Oppel moved to adopt the 2010-2011 Redistricting Plan 1A as presented by Assistant Superintendent Lorraine Rossner with recommended minor changes; seconded by Arlene Liscinsky. Discussion – Kathy Yolish read a letter from Kate Kutash proposing a one time, one child per family waiver for only one year for the half dozen third grade children affected by redistricting to remain at their current school with provisions. Freeman Burr suggested clarification was needed for those students who took placements this year based on Choice. Win Oppel called for a Point of Order noting that the item of waivers is not on the agenda and is not germane to redistricting and suggested moving discussion to the June meeting. Vote was taken and motion passed unanimously.

Chairman Walsh commented that this process began three years ago when the Board engaged a firm to do a demographics study and ultimately hired Ross Haber to develop a more finite redistricting plan and was not something that was rushed into.

Adjournment

Paula Ellis made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 8:17 p.m.; seconded by Jay Francino-Quinn; vote 7-0; motion passed.

Diane Luther

Diane Luther
Recording Secretary – Board of Education
June 9, 2010