

DATE: November 23, 2020
TIME: 6:30 PM
LOCATION: Via Google Meeting (Virtual)

MINUTES

Stratford Board of Education – Finance Committee



Attendee Names

Karen Rodia(Committee Chair), Allison DelBene (Committee Vice Chair), Andrea Corcoran, Janice Cupee, Bob DeLorenzo, Vinny Faggella, Amy Wiltsie, Janet Robinson (Superintendent), Pam Mangini, Teresa Lycoudes (Recording Secretary), Kevin Klemme, Heather Borges

Absent

All Present (Bob DeLorenzo arrived late)

Call to Order

The meeting was called to order by Committee Chair, Karen Rodia, at 6:30 PM. A quorum was confirmed. The special meeting minutes from 10/26/2020 were accepted on a motion made by Mr. Faggella; seconded by Mr.Proto, and passed unanimously. A roll call vote was taken.

Items for Possible Action and/or Discussion

Budget Summary Report 2019-2020

Chief Operating Officer, Pam Mangini, gave a brief financial overview of the period since the last meeting of October 26th. Ms. Mangin said there are two areas of concerns, at present:

1. Preschools - The CT Office of Early Childhood has changed the funding structure for grants in support of preschools. This caused a closer assessment of the program, which made it apparent that the preschool could not sustain itself on the funding received from grants and tuition. After making adjustments, it is still projected that the program will end the 20-21 year in a deficit. There is a balance at present due to enrollment being down because of the COVID-19 pandemic.
2. Food Services Program - The Food Service program has been carrying a deficit for years, and it has been brought to attention that the Community Eligibility Provision (CEP) is presenting a cost to the district, therefore adding to the deficit. At some point in time, the Board will need to take a closer look at this and consider adding a line item to the budget for this cost

Expenditures: Mrs. Mangini reported Salaries and Benefits continue to be monitored due to ongoing staffing changes. She said there are some savings associated with the SPED summer

school accounts, and it is likely it will be necessary to use this to offset some of the other special education expenses. Special Education costs continue to increase in regards to out of district placements. The salaries savings will be used to offset some of this; however, any additional out of district placements will most certainly impact the budget.

COVID Expenses - Ms. Mangini included reporting on the CRF Spending Plan and an inventory on how the funding is being used. Available Funding equated \$1,684,510.00 and Total Proposed Spending is for the full amount available.

Grants have been used appropriately. Mr. Klemme reported on the Grants accounting. The Grants Report was distributed to Committee members prior to the meeting. The report will be posted on the District website.

Utilities - Mrs. Mangini reported that utilities are tracking on budget at this point in time as normal. Paul Drummey of CREC completed the documentation of the electricity costs related to the SHS construction project. A Board of Education invoice in the amount of \$154,510.69 along with back up was presented to the Building Committee for approval. Mrs. Managini said the district is working with the Town for the FY credit to our operating budget.

Mrs. Rodia asked if there are savings due to some of the schools operating remotely, at present. Mrs. Mangini said there are some savings, but nothing huge.

Mr. Proto asked about the meter problem at Flood Middle School. Director of Facilities, Rich Ruggiero, said the error was on our settings and not the contractor. The District is working closely with DBS to find resolution. Mrs. Mangini said she would keep the committee apprised of this situation.

Mrs. Rodia addressed the deep cleaning being done at the schools during this pandemic. She said that she has heard reports that this in fact is not happening. Mr. Ruggiero reported that the outside contractors are only at the elementary schools and not at the middle or high schools. He said when the crew arrives, they are required to check in at the Main Office at each school they visit and report to the Custodian at that particular building.

Mr. DeLorenzo stated that Dr. Robinson should stay on top of this and work with Mr. Ruggiero to make sure this cleaning is happening.

Mr. David stated that Board and Committee members should be reminded to follow the proper Chain of Command. He said all inquiries or complaints should go through the Superintendent's Office and Board and Committee members should not be reaching out directly to departments and staff with requests and/or questions.

SPED/Enrollment Reports: Director of Pupil Personnel Svc., Heather Borges, reported on the financial status of Special Education. She informed the committee that 106 students are currently outplaced. This represents an increase of 4 students. She reminded them of new legislation that says a special education student must be educated until the age of 22. The

projected deficit could increase to over \$400,000. Mrs. Borges said she and Mrs. Mangini are closely monitoring these accounts.

Budget Transfers: Budget Transfers in the amount of \$556,269.00 were presented to the Committee for approval. Four new accounts were created to separate overtime expenses from the custodians' base salaries accounts. This adjustment will help the Board better analyze costs and trends. The transfer entries are to transfer the budgetary overtime funds from the Custodian Salary accounts to their respective Overtime accounts.

A MOTION TO APPROVE WAS MADE BY BEN PROTO; SECONDED BY BOB DELORENZO AND PASSED UNANIMOUSLY ON A ROLL CALL VOTE. .

Enrollment - Enrollment continues. Any decrease in enrollment is most likely due to some students enrolling in parochial / private schools offering 5 days/week. Dr. Robinson said the levels at some schools are concerning, especially the minority percentages in our southside schools. She said the district will need to explore street boundaries and see whether adjustments can be made to the feeder elementary schools.

Mr. Proto said this is something that will be reviewed and looked into by the School Plant Planning Committee. A regular meeting is scheduled for December 3, 2020.

Adjournment: Hearing no further discussion, the meeting adjourned at 7:21 PM. Motion: BP- Ben Proto Seconded by: BD - Bob David - and carried.

**SECRETARY
APPROVAL:**

(Signature & Date)

11/25/2020

