

**New Hartford Public Schools**

**Town of New Hartford, CT**

**Board of Education**

**Meeting Minutes**

**Tuesday March 7, 2017 @ 7:00pm**

**Antolini School – Multi Purpose  
Room**

**Present:** Josh Adams, Jen Benaitis, Karl Hermonat, Mary Misiorski, Stacie Cull, Penny Miller, Pat Spaziani, Jen Zenuh, Superintendent Brian Murphy

**Absent:** Cindy Duval

**A. Chair to Open Meeting:** Chairman Jen Benaitis called the meeting to order at 7:01pm.

**Chair Select Order of Business:** Jen Benaitis asked to amended the agenda to add *Review, Discuss, and Possible Take Action on the 5 Year Capital Plan* under New Business.

**Motion** by Josh Adams to accept amendment to new business, second by Pat Spaziani. All in favor, none opposed. **Motion Passes**

**B. Old Business:**

Jen Benaitis addressed the concern contained in Laura Polakow's letter about Barkhamsted's Superintendent retiring and possibly reaching out to the town about sharing the position. It was clarified that he will not be retiring this year. The concern about how many meetings outside of Tuesday night that New Hartford's Superintendent

attends was also addressed. Jen Benaitis clarified that she had not asked Mr. Murphy the number of additional outside meeting due to it being budget season but that Mr. Murphy, along with other board members, do attend addition evening meeting separate from the BOE.

## **C. Superintendent Report**

### **1. Budget 2017-2018-**

Superintended Brian Murphy reviewed proposed budget reduction which included reduction in the following areas: Unemployment 20K, equipment (student desk and chairs) 14k, reduction of computers purchased for students @ \$3,600, maintenance @ \$40K (excludes mowers which are in capital plan), professional development @ 27K, substitute teachers @ 25K, Talented and Gifted Program eliminated @ \$3.4K, guided reading books @ \$5K, purchase services and BOE funded student trips @\$12K, and teacher salary @\$50K.

Mr. Murphy addressed a previous motion from the BOE meeting asking to depict how these cuts will negatively impact the school district. He emphasized that the proposed reduction will negatively impact the school district by limiting resources to improve the school environment by cutting maintenance, increasing class sizes by cutting a teacher salary, and compromising student achievement because of the reduction of teacher training from PD, elimination of the mindfulness program and collaboration with regional districts. Mr. Murphy prioritized the reductions from least impactful to most impactful.

**Motion** by Josh Adams to approve the 2017-2018 operating budget for \$8,170,455.00 minus \$34K (\$20k from unemployment and \$14k in equipment) for a new total of \$8,136,445.00, second by Jen Zenuh. Those in favor Stacie Cull, Josh Adams Karl Hermonat, Jenn Zenuh, Penny Miller, Mary Misiorski. Opposed Jen Benaitis and Pat Spaziani. **Motion passes.**

#### **D. Consent Agenda**

**Motion** by Josh Adams to accept the consent agenda, second by Mary, additional discussion regarding clarification of minutes.

#### **Approval of Minutes-February 21,2017**

Minutes on February 21,2017 to be changed; Motion regarding the reduction of 6<sup>th</sup> grade sessions from 5 to 4, Karl Hermonat voted against but was recorded as voting in favor. Also a change on page 3 from Martin Luther Kind Day to Martin Luther King Day.

**Motion** by Jen Zenuh to approve the minutes as amended, second by Stacie Cull. All in favor, none opposed. **Motion Passes.**

#### **E. Communication of the Board of Education**

Jennifer Benaitis read a letter from Maria Moore in regards to the SBC and returning all unexpended funds back to the town before being utilized to fund additional projects. The letter also asked for clarification on the newly elected board member and their ability to vote at meetings.

#### **F. Opportunity for Public Comment**

Laura Polakow- clarified her letter presented to the BOE in regards to the type of additional meetings and their times that are attended. She also discussed Barkhamsted's Superintendent and the ability for the district to have him as part time.

First Selectman Dan Jerram (30 Willow Lane)- clarified that at the board of finance meeting the resolution was passed that The Board of Selectmen can reduce or modify the project without exceeding the \$4,751,000 already approved to be spent. Since it has already been reviewed, Jerram expressed that there is no need for legal clarification since the Board of Select has already been given the authority to change it.

Paul Barrow- asked about discussing the attendance of the recent outcome of the preK open house and if it was possible to entertain another classroom if the enrollment was up to 16.

Dave Bombara (Country Lane)- expressed concern with what the dollar amount will be to reopen Bakerville School if it were closed and the attendance records are wrong. Mr. Bombara also wondered how much the cost to expand the other New Hartford Schools would be in relation to how much would be saved by closing Bakerville. He stated that he would like public comment to be available after the Adhoc Committee presented.

Maria Moore- clarified her letter and questioned the legality of meetings and decisions reached by the school board committee. She also voiced her concerns in regards to the empty position on the BOE and their ability to vote. She also expressed her thoughts on the importance of the Gifted and Talented program for students.

Glen Phillips- revisited previous concern about students not having Veteran's Day off and asked the board to consider putting it into the school calendar.

## **G. Reports**

- **Adhoc committee**

Karl Hermonat presented a hand out (see attached) and summarized classroom sized for preK-6 and room availability along with possible 2 school and 3 school configurations. On behalf of the Adhoc committee, Karl Hermonat presented two recommendations 1) To address the short term needs of the 2017 school year, noting

that the committee recommended to not close any school during the 2017-2018 school year to give the Board of Education sufficient time to digest and disseminate the population data and more importantly seek public input and garner support from any decision from the Board of Selectmen and the Board of Finance. 2) Regarding the long term use the committee stressed the importance of keeping all options available to develop a thoughtful and sustainable plan. The committee recommends the development of a district 5 year plan to provide direction for future use of the building. The idea of getting guidance as a vision from the general public's values that could be used for the next 5 years to address the goals of the town was discussed.

- **Facility committee**

Jen Zenuh presented 3 possible projects that the building sub committee would like to revisit as a change of order. The sub committee would like the BOE recommendation on these projects. These 3 projects include

- **Ceiling work at Antolini-** change of order to replace all existing tiles in the classroom and storage areas as well as install new H-Vac grills.
- **Heating system at Antolini-** complete whole project and system that would put a glycol mix into the system and new strainers to protect pipes from freezing. A refractor meter would continuously monitor and protect pipes.
- **Air conditioning in the Library at Antolini**

There was discussed of changing the lighting to more energy efficient bulbs and fixtures but it was not included along with the ceiling tile work. It would be ideal to complete this before the tiles, though. Jen Zenuh stated that a change in the lighting would create a projected annual savings of \$16k, a \$5k gain when output of financing the lights, \$11k each year, was deducted.

Patricia requested that Brian Murphy reach out to the other schools who have already completed this project to see if projected savings are accurate. Mr. Murphy will do this.

**Motion by** Josh Adams that the New Hartford BOE believes that the ceiling tiles project and glycol heating system project would benefit the New Hartford school building, second by Jen Zenuh. All in favor, none opposed. **Motion Passes.**

**Motion** by Jen Zenuh that the BOE believes that the a/c air handling project will benefit the New Hartford school building, second by Karl Hermonant. Those in favor- Stacie Cull, Karl Hermonant, Jen Zenuh, Penny Miller, Mary Misiorski. Opposed- Pat Spaziani, Jen Benaitis, Josh Adams. **Motion Passes.**

## **H. New Business**

### **1. Pre-k Program**

**Motion** by Karl Hermonant to increase the preK tuition cost of the upcoming year from \$3k to \$4.5K for 4's and \$1.1k \$1.8K for the 3's, second by Mary Misiorski and she requested handouts on data for comparable programs to be better informed before voting.

After further discussion, Penny Miller volunteered to call around and get information on outside preschool's numbers and cost, both public and private, and Karl Hermonant **removed his motion.**

### **2. 2.Oak Hill**

**Motion** by Karl Hermonant for the board to ask the superintendent to contact Oak Hill to discuss if they have interest in addition space for the 2017-2018 school year, second by Jen Zenuh. All in favor, none opposed. **Motion passes.** Superintendent Brian Murphy said that he will do that this week.

### **3. Review, Discuss, and Possibly Take Action on 5 Year Capital Plan**

Jen Zenuh reviewed meeting with cap x. about the maintenance with septic and cap x recommended that that Mr. Murphy put in line 11 a septic system analysis and prevention for next year. The mowers were brought from 2 different line items to one for this year and next year.

Jen Benaitis discussed the floors in the gym at Antolini to prevent the kids from slipping. They are still waiting on a quote.

**Motion** by Josh Adams to approve the 5 year capital plan as presented, second by Karl Hermonant. All in favor, none opposed. **Motion Passes.**

**Motion** by Josh Adams to approve the 2017-2018 capital budget, second by Pat Spaziani. All in favor, none opposed. **Motion passes.**

#### **I. Adjournment**

**Motion**, by Josh Adams, second by Stacie Cull to adjourn the meeting at 9:48. All in favor, none opposed. **Motion passes**