

**New Hartford Public Schools
TOWN OF NEW HARTFORD, CONNECTICUT
BOARD OF EDUCATION
SPECIAL MEETING MINUTES
Monday, March 28, 2016 at 7:00 PM
Antolini School – Multi-Purpose Room
80 Antolini Road, New Hartford, Connecticut**

PRESENT: Josh Adams, Jen Benaitis, Cindy Duval, Sue Lundin, Penny Miller, Mary Misiorski, Pat Spaziani, Jen Zenuh.

ABSENT: Staci Cull.

1. CHAIR TO OPEN MEETING: Chairman Sue Lundin called the meeting to order at 7:00PM.

2. REVIEW AND APPROVE BUDGET FOR 2016-2017:

MOTION: Ms. Benaitis, Ms. Spaziani second, **that as part of budget review and approval, and subject to, relocating, all central office operations and administration from Town Hall to Bakerville Consolidated School, pre K to Bakerville Consolidated School, grades K and 1 to New Hartford Elementary School, Grade 2 to Ann Antolini School, and rescinding the addition of a 5th grade teacher, that, we delay for 1 year, the closing of Bakerville Consolidated School from 2016 to 2017, and, whereby such delay, provides for the Superintendent to track, and report monthly to the Board of Education data regarding the towns birth certificates, incoming and outgoing elementary students and any projections and analysis that impacts school enrollment, and that this Board of Education approve its budget for the 2016-2017 fiscal year with a zero percent change over last years' 2015-2016 fiscal year budget and that this Board of Education revisit starting in January 2017, the consideration of any action to be taken regarding the future of the Bakerville Consolidated School; Ms. Benaitis rescinded this motion.**

Discussion had ensued following Ms. Benaitis' motion and preceding her ultimate withdrawal of the motion. Among the points discussed were the expenses of moving the Central Office to Bakerville School and redistricting the line that established whether a given street goes to Bakerville School or New Hartford Elementary School. Mr. Adams opined that an opportunity exists to couple keeping Bakerville School open with some of the other needs that he deems are important for the district, such as adding teaching positions. He noted that through this coupling, he believes that the Board will receive the support of a large faction of town to aid in getting the Board's budget approved. Ms. Duval and Ms. Misiorski both expressed concerns that the Board of Education may find themselves in the exact same position a year from now. Ms. Zenuh noted that a decision of this scale should be decided through a referendum.

Ms. Lundin noted she has been in communication with the chairman of the Board of Finance and he has indicated that they are very willing to work with the Board of Education.

MOTION: Mr. Adams, Ms. Miller second, **to recess the meeting at 7:24PM for no longer than ten minutes to allow Tom Buzzi, as chairman of the Save Bakerville School coalition, to speak during the recess; unanimously approved.**

Mr. Tom Buzzi addressed the Board. He agreed that the notion of closing Bakerville School has been discussed for years, as he has done extensive research into the topic for the last four months. He reported that he has serious regret in missing the October 6, 2015 meeting and

December, 2015 meeting where the Board decided to close the school. Mr. Buzzi noted that his group is willing to work with the Board and looks forward to the town coming together again. He commented though that his group is not just focused on the Bakerville School building alone but instead of what it represents: the education of the children. He noted that among the concerns expressed through the possible closing of Bakerville School that came from the group of people he is associated with included extended bus rides for students, children moving conceivably from Bakerville School to New Hartford Elementary to then Antolini School, possible overcrowding at New Hartford Elementary, and classroom capacities increasing. Mr. Buzzi opined that one year is not enough time to make the necessary assessment. He commented that two years would provide enough time to evaluate the trend and garner parental input and community involvement.

MOTION: Ms. Spaziani, Ms. Miller second, **to reconvene at 7:29PM; unanimously approved.**

The percent of increase over last year's budget should the Bakerville School remain open coupled with the addition of two teaching positions was discussed.

MOTION: Mr. Adams, Ms. Zenuh second, **to add \$210K for Bakerville School remaining open to the budget dated March 22, 2016, less the \$31K allocated for moving costs, resulting in 0.7% increase; Motion passed with Mr. Adams, Ms. Duval, Ms. Lundin, Ms. Miller, Ms. Misiorski, Ms. Zenuh voting aye while Ms. Spaziani was opposed and Ms. Benaitis abstained.**

It was noted that on page 19 of the budget, there was a data entry error for the allocation of \$45,950 for Line 313 - Pupil Services – Evaluations and Other Services, which had not been included in the sum total. Mr. Murphy recommended that a transfer of \$20K from Special Education Bus leases as well as taking out the \$20K for Behavior Consultant will cover this line with the net effect of not creating any additions to the bottom line of the budget. It was also noted that \$5K would come from evaluations.

MOTION: Ms. Miller, Ms. Lundin second, **to recess the meeting at 7:52PM for ten minutes to allow comment from Board of Finance Chairman Jim Fitzgerald; unanimously approved.**

Mr. Fitzgerald requested that the Board approve a budget reflecting the dollar figure of the budget, rather than phrasing it in terms of percentage of increase or decrease. He noted that if something should need to change within the Board's budget, it can still get communicated to the Board of Finance, just preferably before the Public Hearing of April 6, 2016.

MOTION: Mr. Adams, Ms. Zenuh second, **to reconvene at 7:54PM; unanimously approved.**

MOTION: Ms. Duval, Ms. Miller second, **to adopt and approve an \$8,052,798.00 budget for the 2016-2017 school year; Motion passed with Mr. Adams, Ms. Benaitis, Ms. Duval, Ms. Lundin, Ms. Miller, Ms. Misiorski, and Ms. Zenuh voting aye while Ms. Spaziani opposed.**

3. ADJOURNMENT:

MOTION: Mr. Adams, Ms. Spaziani second, **to adjourn at 7:57PM; unanimously approved.**

**Respectfully submitted,
Pamela Colombie
Recording Secretary**