

# **TOWN OF SOUTH WINDSOR**

## **MINUTES**

**TOWN COUNCIL/BOARD OF EDUCATION  
ROOM ALT. 6  
TIMOTHY EDWARDS MIDDLE SCHOOL**

### **JOINT BUDGET WORK SESSION**

**DATE: MARCH 25, 2019**

**TIME: 7:00 P.M.**

#### **1. Call Meeting to Order**

Mayor Paterna called the meeting to order at 7:05 p.m.

#### **2. Roll Call**

##### **Town Council**

Members Present: Mayor Andrew Paterna  
Deputy Mayor Liz Pendleton  
Councilor Mary Justine Hockenberry  
Councilor Lisa Maneeley  
Councilor Matthew Riley  
Councilor Janice Snyder

Members Absent: Councilor Audrey Delnicki  
Councilor Karen Lydecker

Also Present: Matthew B. Galligan, Town Manager

##### **Board of Education**

Members Present: Chairperson Craig Zimmerman  
Vice Chairperson Jessica Waterhouse  
Arthur Adduci  
Beth Esstman  
Erica Evans  
David Joy  
Michael Paré  
Richard Stahr

Members Absent: Michael Gonzalez

Also Present: Superintendent of Schools Dr. Kate Carter  
Asst. Superintendent Colin McNamara  
Asst. Superintendent Cheryl Mortensen  
Chris Chermerka, Business Manager

## **MINUTES**

### **Joint Budget Work Session - Town Council/Board of Education**

**Page 2**

**March 25, 2019**

#### **ITEM:**

#### **3. Public Participation**

Mr. Philip Richard came before the Council and made a statement, as shown in attached **Exhibit A**.

#### **4. Items for Discussion**

##### **A. Board of Education Proposed Budget for Fiscal Year 2019/2020**

Councilor Snyder started conversations regarding the Board of Education Budget. She stated that she feels the budget is well put together and is very transparent.

Dr. Kate Carter, Superintendent of Schools, answered questions from Councilor Snyder by explaining that the staff members that are being requested due to increasing enrollment are in the following areas: K-5 Teachers, English Learners, Literacy, Nursing, and Project Worth. At Pleasant Valley Elementary School, the Non-Certified Library Manager will be shifting to a Library Media Specialist. In the future, this change will also be proposed at the Eli Terry Elementary School and Philip R. Smith Elementary School. Under Excess Cost & Agency Placement, 70% was used for that revenue calculation. Councilor Snyder pointed out that the Board of Education does not always know the percentage until they get it. Dr. Carter proceeded to answer questions by explaining that under Business Education, there is a 19.28% decrease which equates to \$598.00. This is due to a decrease in program expenses. The .5 position increase in Music is a K-12 position. This position vacancy was due to a retirement which has not been filled. World Languages program was launched with first and second graders. The new position will allow the Board of Education to continue this program to grades third and fourth. Project Worth is a program to students who are eligible for Special Education service and qualify for program continuation after high school graduation. This program supports 18 to 21- year-olds. Dr. Carter then explained that presently all of the secondary schools are fully 1 to 1 environment where each student has a chrome book. Orchard Hill Elementary School opened with a 1 to 1 environment. When Eli Terry and Philip R. Smith Elementary Schools open, they will also have a 1 to 1 environment. Mrs. Mortensen added that all of the elementary schools, grade 2-5 will have classroom sets which are not intended to go home. Orchard Hill Elementary School has I-Pads in Kindergarten and First grade.

**(Discussions Continued on Next Page)**

## MINUTES

### Joint Budget Work Session - Town Council/Board of Education

Page 3

March 25, 2019

#### ITEM:

#### 4. A. (Continued)

Dr. Carter informed the Council that there is an intricate map of where all the devices are and where they will move to as kids move on, as well as when new schools are opened.

Mr. Galligan stated that there is one item that he wished the Board of Education to reconsider. He was in a meeting with Dr. Carter, and she explained that she had proposed to put the fee that is charged to the 4<sup>th</sup> R Program into the Board of Education Budget. Other recreational programs are not charged, and the 4<sup>th</sup> R Program will mirror how those other programs are handled. Mr. Galligan stated that he was ecstatic and felt it was a great way to lower costs to the residents. He was disheartened to find out that the Board of Education has taken that out of their budget. In next year's budget, there is \$775,000 on the Town side of the budget to purchase the property so that Pleasant Valley Elementary School will have enough space, as well as other items such as the high school field, new roofs, new boilers, and OPEB. There are a lot of things the Board of Education and Town do together that does not get transferred to each other, we do it to keep the taxes down and make sure that operations run smoothly. Mr. Galligan stated that he is not asking the Board of Education to take care of these items, but would like the Board of Education to reconsider their decision about the \$59,000 taken out of their budget. The minimum wage may go up, and this could have a huge impact on the 4<sup>th</sup> R Program.

Dr. Carter explained that the Board is aware that her original proposal to the budget was to include the \$59,000 utility costs into the Board of Education Budget. The rationale behind this recommendation was that it should be treated like all of the other Park & Recreation programs, but ultimately the Board of Education made the decision to reduce that from the budget.

Answering questions from Deputy Mayor Pendleton, Dr. Carter explained that there are reasons why students are charged to park at the high school, such as knowing who is parking on the premises. To some degree, it serves as a privilege. There are families that do not use the school's transportation, but ultimately our taxpayers are paying for this service. There are also people in Town whose children do not go to public schools, and they are still paying taxes. Even if a student drives, it does not mean that they give up their right to use the bus. There is no charge to a student who parks at Duprey Field.

**(Discussions Continued on Next Page)**

## MINUTES

### Joint Budget Work Session - Town Council/Board of Education

Page 4

March 25, 2019

#### ITEM:

#### 4. A. (Continued)

Councilor Pendleton requested that the Superintendent of Schools check the form that is used for student parking for accuracy.

Chairman Zimmerman explained to the Council that when the Board discussed the transfer of \$59,000 from the General Government to the Board of Education, it was not about the dollars, it was a policy decision. There are two options: 1) the Town Council could increase our budget by \$59,000; or 2) find a way to fund it within the proposed Board of Education budget. Chairman Zimmerman asked which option Mr. Galligan is proposing. Mr. Galligan felt that the Board of Education should find it within their proposed budget.

Answering questions from Councilor Riley, Dr. Carter explained that South Windsor pays higher salaries than surrounding Towns because surrounding Towns have lower social economics than South Windsor and outside sources look at the ability to pay. The higher salaries help South Windsor to retain good teachers.

Dr. Carter informed Councilor Hockenberry that the change in the Open Choice program grant is student reimbursement went from 3% participation rate to 2% participation rate. South Windsor is at a different tier now which means that there are fewer students generating revenue. South Windsor's enrollment has increased, and last year there were unknowns, which made the Board of Education decide to change its participation. The Open Choice program gives Hartford students the opportunity to attend suburban schools. Students start this program in the lower grades, usually Kindergarten. It has been found that if a student does not start in the lower grades, they are not as successful. Dr. Carter said she is not anticipating problems with the Open Choice Grant and is comfortable with the revenue numbers proposed.

Mr. Joy explained that the funds for the utilities of the 4<sup>th</sup> R Program are presently paid for by the parents through enrollment fees. If the Board puts this item of \$59,000 into the Board of Education budget, it becomes a taxpayers cost.

**(Discussions Continued on Next Page)**

## **MINUTES**

### **Joint Budget Work Session - Town Council/Board of Education**

**Page 5**

**March 25, 2019**

#### **ITEM:**

#### **4. A. (Continued)**

Answering questions from Mayor Paterna, Dr. Carter stated that in coming years there would be more emphasis on work based opportunities for student internships. There is a lot of work happening with our community colleges. Dr. Carter explained that the Robotics Program is presently paid for by the parents of the student who participate.

Mrs. Chemerka explained that the pension contribution in the budget is presently \$250,000. Dr. Carter stated that if there are unexpended funds, it is anticipated that those funds will be put into the pension account. The Health Care Reserve is currently at 31%. The goal is approximately 25% of claims, so the remainder of the funds will be used to support the pension or other needs that arise.

Mr. Galligan explained that when a budget is being prepared, the percentage that has to be put in for health is based upon trending of other Town's the same size.

#### **5. Executive Session**

None

#### **6. Adjournment**

Councilor Snyder made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 8:16 p.m. Councilor Maneeley seconded the motion; and it was approved, unanimously.

Respectfully submitted,

---

Deborah W. Reid  
Clerk of the Council