

PLAINVILLE BOARD OF EDUCATION

Special Meeting Minutes

Special Meeting Title: Board Budget Development Session

Date: Wednesday, February 6, 2019

Time: 7:00 p.m.

Place: Plainville High School Learning Commons
Plainville, CT

Attendees: Michael Giuliano, Deborah Hardy, Board Chair, Laurie Peterson, Nicole Palmieri, Crystal St. Lawrence, Becky Tyrrell, Kathy Wells and Foster White

Late Arrivals Lori Consalvo, 7:10 PM

Members Absent: None

Also Present: Maureen Brummett, Ed.D., Superintendent
Steven LePage, Asst. Superintendent
Sam Adlerstein, Director of Business and Operations

Early Departures: None

The Board's Budget Development meeting was called to order at 7:01 PM by Chair Deborah Hardy. The Pledge of Allegiance then took place.

1) Motion to adopt a resolution entitled, "Resolution of the Plainville Board of Education Old Linden Street School Demolition Project (110-0057EA)—CLOSEOUT

Robert Lee, Town Manager, met with the School Construction staff on January 28th regarding the close-out of the Old Linden Street School Demolition Project. The school construction staff indicated that they will process Plainville's reimbursement request immediately after receiving the adoption of a resolution and acceptance by the Board of Education stating that the Old Linden Street School Demolition is complete.

A MOTION WAS THEN MADE BY FOSTER WHITE TO ADOPT A RESOLUTION ENTITLED, "RESOLUTION OF THE PLAINVILLE BOARD OF EDUCATION—OLD LINDEN STREET SCHOOL DEMOLITION PROJECT (110-0057EA)", AND TO CERTIFY THAT THE OLD LINDEN STREET SCHOOL DEMOLITION PROJECT IS COMPLETE, AND HAS BEEN ACCEPTED BY THE PLAINVILLE BOARD OF EDUCATION AS COMPLETE. LAURIE PETERSON SECONDED THE MOTION. THE MOTION UNANIMOUSLY CARRIED 8-0.

2) Additional Review of the Superintendent's Proposed Budget

Recap of Budget Worksessions:

Dr. Brummett began by referring to a handout she gave to the Board. She stated that the information was a brief summary of the adjustments that were made to the proposed budget during the two Board worksessions in January, as well as the answers to specific questions posed by the Board.

Some of the questions posed by the Board include:

- ▶ Risks and Reductions in the Superintendent's Budget
- ▶ Chart quantifying the range of 1.0% to 3.0% increases
- ▶ Reconciliation of Non-Bargaining Salary 12.2% increase
- ▶ Analysis of Substitute Costs
- ▶ Analysis of Pre-School Tuition
- ▶ Potential adjustments to 3.20% increase and 3.0% increase

RISKS AND REDUCTIONS IN SUPERINTENDENT'S BUDGET	DESCRIPTION
SHAPE Proposal	1 FTE, supplies and support
Tutor at Wheeler	Justification is for two, reduced to one
Art teacher reduction at PHS (offset)	Reduces frequency of elective offerings
MSP Language Arts Teacher	Reduced a few years ago. Compromises our desirable teaching team configuration.
MSP Custodian	Less than ideal to maintain cleanliness of buildings and resulted in increased part-time custodial cost.
Substitute teacher cost, while increased significantly, are still likely budgeted low.	See analysis of substitute costs
Supplies, consumable and technology price increases must be offset by reduced quantities.	Approximate inflation is 2.5% of supply budget.
Raises projected for negotiations are at-risk	Office professionals and custodian negotiations are pending.

The total impact of these items is \$492,000 or a potential of 1.32% budget increase.

EFFICIENCIES GAINED CURRENTLY AND ONGOING	DESCRIPTION
Energy Program	While the program began a number of years ago, efforts are still underway to sustain each year's savings.
Reduced district busing cost	Change resulted in more than \$100,000 savings
Initiative to keep students in District	Avoid special education outplacements and students choosing Magnet or other school initiatives.
Reduced Social Security tax	To fully take advantage of treatment available to municipalities and with regard to teacher pay.
Liability and Workers' Comp agreement	Change in supplier resulted in -\$100,000 savings
Copier and print restructuring	Document management results in lower paper cost and more electronic means. Change in supplier has resulted in lower cost. Decreased one high speed copier in 2018-19
Centralized software purchasing	Ensures efficiency and lack of duplication
In-house phone upgrade	Estimated savings in excess of \$100,000

The total impact of these efficiencies is over \$1,000,000 annually.

Dr. Brummett explained that Health Insurance is a contributing factor to recent budget increases.

The percentage difference from 2013-17 increases vs. 2017-2020 increases is 7,189.85%.

Additional factors:

- ▶ As part of switching insurance plans, teachers' bargained a one year, somewhat higher than usual pay increase.
- ▶ Attempting to compensate for the higher insurance (on top of ECS reductions) since 2017-18 is catching up to us, i.e., three years of budget freezes.
- ▶ State disallowed Wheeler project costs of \$70,000, and are also included in the 2019-20 budget.

Budget Increase Chart:

		PERCENT CHANGE	\$ CHANGE	CHANGE FROM SUPERINTENDENT
1	2018-19 Budget		\$37,322,912	
2	Superintendent's 19-20 Budget	3.44%	\$1,284,554	0
3		3.25%	\$1,212,995	\$71,559
4		3.20%	\$1,194,333	\$90,221
5		3.00%	\$1,119,687	\$164,867
6		2.00%	\$746,458	\$538,096
7		1.00%	\$373,229	\$911,325
8	Superintendent's 19-20 budget adjustment for health insurance and Wheeler project cost	2.49%	\$928,117	\$356,347

A reduction below row 5 or 3.0% would require a reduction in programs and staff.

Non-Bargaining Salaries:

A 12.2% or \$1,663,527 increase is proposed in the 2019-20 Superintendent's Budget.

- ▶ Underlying pay increase is 2.0%, plus a \$2,186 equity adjustment for select personnel.
- ▶ Two positions added 4.0% of the increase
- ▶ Includes longevity, overtime, and travel not fully recognized in prior budget. A portion of the overtime is related to Town and Police needs.

Substitute Costs Year-to-Date:

FISCAL YEAR	ORIGINAL BUDGET	EXPENDED/ ENCUMBERED	BALANCE	
2015-16	\$295,000	\$365,513	(\$69,713)	
2016-17	\$260,000	\$366,499	(\$106,499)	
2017-18	\$275,000	\$397,579	(\$122,579)	
2018-19	\$280,000	\$228,269	\$51,731	YTD AS OF DECEMBER

2019-20 PROPOSED: \$380,000

Substitute costs have increased over the past few years. Year-to-date is already higher than prior years and prior years significantly overran the budget. In addition to coverage for sick days, we

project twelve staff members out on long-term disability, similar to last year, Staff absences are closely monitored and, where appropriate, corrective action is taken.

Preschool Tuition Income:

We expect full enrollment in 2019-20, at a level similar to 2018-19. 2017-18 included an additional section at Toffolon.

Preschool tuition income budget in 2018-19 is \$150,000 with collections of \$130,000 now expected. The tuition amount is difficult to predict due to discounts based on need and Special Education. Preschool tuition income in the Superintendent 2019-20 budget is \$175,000.

For 2018-19 and 2019-20 preschool tuition offsets Paraprofessional costs.

BOE Potential Reduction Requests for 2019-20 budget:

Reduce use of interns even further than assumed previously	\$10,000
Reduce technical consulting services and software	\$ 1,000
Reduce repairs and maintenance—buildings	\$ 5,000
Reduce repairs and maintenance—Equipment	\$ 1,000
Reduce repairs and maintenance—Plumbing	\$ 2,000
Reduce repairs and maintenance—Electrical	\$ 5,000
Reduce transportation budget for playoff games	\$ 3,000
Adjust special education outplacements	\$ 35,000
Reduce conferences	\$ 5,800
Reduce travel	\$ 1,800
Reduce maintenance supplies	\$ 4,000
Reduce instructional supplies	\$ 12,000
Reduce non-instructional supplies	\$ 2,000
Reduce books	\$ 300
Reduce workbooks	\$ 100
Reduce library books	\$ 1,000
Reduce periodicals	\$ 100
Reduce band equipment replacement	\$ 1,000
SUBTOTAL	\$ 90,100 reductions to 3.20% increase
Adjusted Budget Increase	\$1,194,454 or 3.20%

POTENTIAL REDUCTIONS TO 3.0%

Adjust Special Education outplacements	\$ 55,000
Reduce Wheeler preschool cost	\$ 17,428
Reduce curriculum writing	\$ 4,300
SUBTOTAL	\$ 76,728 reductions to 2.99% increase
Adjusted Budget Increase	\$1,117,726 or 2.99%

Dr. Brummett stated that some of the potential reductions, such as maintenance, will have to be caught up at a future date. Supply reductions can impact teaching and learning, but stopped short of causing significant disruption.

Preschool Transportation Reduction:

Dr. Brummett stated that returning preschool students from Linden to Wheeler for the last 45 days of school in 2020 would save the district approximately \$17,428. On the upside, the pre-k program helps reduce the budget and supports Pre-K-Kgn. transition. On the down side, there is a slight chance Wheeler construction won't run on schedule.

She stated that she and fellow administrators worked diligently to make the reductions the Board Requested, but feels that an increase of 3.44% is needed to sustain the high quality programs that Plainville has instituted.

She then asked for the Board's input:

Nicole Palmieri stated that she is comfortable cutting the budget to a 3.00% increase.

Mrs. Tyrrell stated that she is concerned about reducing the school Interns from FTE to half time.

Foster White asked if the reduction of Interns would then increase the substitute line item.

Dr. Brummett stated that Interns are better prepared for the classroom. Interns are individuals going into the educational fields. Although substitutes do need a Bachelor's degree to become a substitute they are often unfamiliar with the material they are asked to teach. Also, in the past few years, it is harder to get Interns. (the district uses the University of Bridgeport and the University of New Haven)

Matt Guarino, MSP Principal, stated that it is hard to get Interns because of the distance between the two locations but also because student (interns) are moving more toward on-line colleges.

Becky Tyrrell stated that she is also concerned with the reduction in instructional supplies, library books, books/workbooks. She asked why the Board would start out with such a low figure, having no cushion.

Foster White is concerned with the cuts to maintenance and equipment replacement for the Music Department. He stated that Plainville schools has a great music program and this hurts students who can't afford to buy their own instruments. Also, reducing maintenance expenses always comes back with a bigger, more expensive problem at a later date. It makes good economic sense to keep these items in the budget.

Becky Tyrrell stated that she is worried that a 3.0% proposal is too low to start out with should a catastrophic problem arise. She stated that the Board should propose at 3.44% and allow the Town Council to reduce further if they feel the need to do so.

Michael Giuliano stated that the Board has passed lower budgets in the past and the Town Council has always accepted their proposal.

Crystal St. Lawrence stated that while she has been a member of the Board, they have decreased the budget each time, but never put back. She stated that the cuts certainly impact students, and the district can never move forward. She would be fine with a 3.2% increase.

Deborah Hardy commented that the Board has always done well with lower budgets in the past.

Michael Giuliano concurred with Dr. Brummett's comments earlier regarding the increase to insurance costs. He too feels that it is an intricate part of increases to the budget over the last few years.

Dr. Brummett agreed and stated that low budgets are very hard to come by. She stated that Plainville schools does a lot with what they have and is very community oriented. Should the Board decide on a 3.0% increase, she will do what she can to market it to the public. She does however have a real concern if the increase goes lower than 3.0%.

Kathy Wells asked, "What if something catastrophic does happen?"

Dr. Brummett explained that they would have to look to other accounts or go to the Town to request more funding.

Foster White feels that presenting a low budget of 3.0% is fiscally irresponsible.

Becky Tyrrell would consider presenting a budget of 3.2% with the integration of preschool back to Wheeler in February to avoid cutting other costs. This would give the Board a cushion.

Foster White likes the idea. It makes sense.

Laurie Peterson asked if the Town Council can tell the Board where to cut.

Dr. Brummett stated that the Town Council can give the Board a percentage but cannot tell them what line items to cut.

Laurie Peterson stated that Dr. Brummett can decide where to cut and agrees that 3.0% is sufficient.

Nicole Palmieri stated that nothing is that catastrophic that the Council wouldn't help.

Laurie Peterson stated that the Board can always go back to the Town Council for funds if they need to.

Foster White stated that it's bad practice to do so.

Laurie Peterson asked Dr. Brummett if she was okay with a 3.0% budget but stated that there is no way of knowing if the Town Council will cut lower.

Dr. Brummett stated that the district can run and stay in compliance with a 3.0% budget but it is risky to begin at that low a number.

Nicole Palmieri stated that Towns' can be looking at many new state taxes in the coming year. She said that the Board should be concerned about the unknown economic factors when deciding on a budget.

Deborah Hardy said that knowing if the Town Council will reject the Board's proposal is always an unknown factor. She would like to see a 3.0% increase brought to the Council.

Foster White stated that this would be very bad. The Board would be very careless as they are cutting dangerously close.

Becky Tyrrell stated that it is the Superintendent's job to answer to the Board. It's the Board's job to be fiscally responsible and to do what is best for Plainville's students. She feels that 3.44% is the best. If the Board presents the budget to the Town Council, it is up to them to say no, as they are the fiscal agent.

Laurie Peterson asked if money ever goes back to the town.

Dr. Brummett stated that the Finance Subcommittee makes that decision and yes, money has gone back to the town in prior years. She also stated that when she saw Governor Lamont (at the Toffolon Milken Awards Ceremony) she asked if he will be cutting ECS funding. He said he would not. She stated that Plainville should then see another \$260,000 in ECS funds.

Foster White would like to see the \$4300 put back in the curriculum line item.

Rosa Perez stated that the district can use title grant money for some instructional supplies and for Professional Development.

Dr. Brummett stated that there is a software (Newsela) which is no longer used in the district, which will also be a savings and won't have a negative impact.

Nicole Palmieri said she is confident in the Superintendent, that she will not put the district in harms way and feels 3.0% is a good number.

Kathy Wells does not agree on the percentage.

Laurie Peterson is good at 3.0%

Lori Consalvo is good at 3.0%

Michael Giuliano is good at 3.0%

Becky Tyrrell thinks the Board is making a big mistake.

Crystal St. Lawrence stated that it is the Board's job to be here for education. It's not all about the numbers. Improvements to the budget can be made but the Board has to do what is right for the children.

Nicole Palmieri stated that people want to have their children attend Plainville Schools. Many people from other districts want to come here. The Board also receives many CABA awards for their management of the district. It is a good district.

Becky Tyrrell reiterated that chipping away at what has been done in previous years and never putting back is not a good practice. The Board needs to focus on the kids.

Deborah Hardy stated that this is a good district and feels comfortable with a 3.0% increase.

Michael Giuliano stated that the Board has supported various renovation projects and the district continues to grow. He disagrees with an increase above 3.0%. The district will still continue to grow.

Foster White again reiterated that if something goes wrong, the district will pay the price. For example, the Middle School has leaks in many of its classrooms. This is not conducive to education. By taking funds out of maintenance the schools infrastructure suffers. He stated that schools in Hartford are drastically different than Plainville. The Board needs to provide a good learning environment for its students.

Dr. Brummett stated that 3.44% is ideal but if the Board's consensus is to go with 3.0%, she will do her best and hopes they can count on the Town Council for support if needed. There are inherent risks with a 3.0% budget but the district will move forward.

Deb Hardy asked for a consensus:

Deborah Hardy feels 3.0% is a good budget

Laurie Peterson is good at 3.0%

Lori Consalvo is good at 3.0%

Michael Giuliano is good at 3.0%

Foster White does not like the number being so low.

Becky Tyrrell No

Kathy Wells No

Crystal St. Lawrence No

After taking a consensus of the Board, a 3.0% increase, with \$2000 added back into the budget for instructional supplies, will then go to a vote and final approval at the Regular Business Meeting of the Board of Education on Monday, February 11th at 7 PM in the Plainville High School Cafeteria.

A MOTION WAS MADE BY MICHAEL GIULIANO TO ADJOURN THE MEETING. LAURIE PETERSON SECONDED THE MOTION. THE MOTION UNANIMOUSLY CARRIED 9-0. The meeting was adjourned at 8:06 PM

Respectfully submitted,



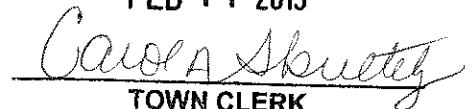
Joan Calistro

Recorder of Minutes

Word/Board/min special meeting 020719 budget

RECEIVED

FEB 11 2019


TOWN CLERK