

DANBURY BOARD OF EDUCATION

FINANCE COMMITTEE MEETING

JUNE 26, 2019

Present: Gladys Cooper, Richard Jannelli, Fred Karrat

Also Present: Joe Martino, Kim Thompson, Joe Britton, Dr. Sal Pascarella, Dr. Kara Casimiro, Anne Mead, Kate Conetta, Kevin Walston, Kelly Truchsess, Pat Johnston, Emanuela Palmares

Meeting called to order by R. Jannelli at 5:30pm.

J. Martino provided draft budget reduction handouts; discussion ensued.

Recommended cuts include approx. \$1M in staff cuts, approx. \$1.2M in various other cuts including health insurance savings, curriculum development, heating oil, instructional supplies, technology lease, security grant. Identified approx. \$500K in possible delayed position filling if needed to make up deficit.

Noted that this was the most challenging in the last 8 years in terms of closing books in the black. Several people noted there is no room for error or variation as we are running so close to the margin, it would create a financial issue immediately. Concerns about rolling \$500K-\$1M deficit into next year's budget. Contributing factors include increased hires at the start of the school year, large number of health claims in February and April. Expectation of jump for special education spending due to out-of-district placements – tuition & transportation costs.

Mayor is aware of the financial situation. Clarification received from the mayor that any special education "excess" funds provided back from the state are already rolled into the city's allotment for education, so only if the reimbursement exceeds what it has been in previous years will additional funds be passed to the schools. Mayor also made an offer to provide \$500-600K in funding to the schools if needed – this is separate from the Matrix money (\$550K) which pays out only once the project moves forward.

F. Karrat moved, seconded by G. Cooper, to accept the amended budget as proposed. Motion passed.

Before the meeting ended, R. Jannelli commented: we can't go on any longer having meetings to discuss reductions to our proposed budget. We are eroding the foundation of our financial stability and we can no longer do more with less. It's time to unite the stakeholders in Danbury and next year put forth a plan to advocate from both city and state for more funding. We have needs and we must use them to support our requests .

Motion made by G. Cooper, seconded by F. Karrat, to adjourn the June 26 Finance Committee Meeting. Motion passed and the meeting adjourned at 6:45pm.

Kate Conetta