

**COVENTRY BOARD OF EDUCATION
APPROVED MINUTES
SPECIAL MEETING OF THURSDAY, FEBRUARY 18, 2010**

Members Present: Larry Pietrantonio, Chairman
Cheryl Trudon, Vice Chairman
Mary Ann Emanuele, Secretary
John Barrett
Jennifer Beausoleil
Mary Kortmann
Mark Malcolm

Administrators Present: Dr. Donna Bernard, Superintendent

Also present were Paul Noel, Director of Physical Plant and Facilities; Gina Olearczyk, PSSS staff; Alan Marshall, AFSCME Council 4 Representative. The Journal Inquirer and The Chronicle newspapers were represented. All motions are directed to the Coventry Board of Education.

I. CALL TO ORDER

By: Chairman, L. Pietrantonio at 7:29 p.m.
Place: Town Hall Annex

II. SALUTE THE FLAG

The Pledge of Allegiance was led by L. Pietrantonio.

III. AUDIENCE OF CITIZENS

There were none.

IX. OLD BUSINESS

L. Pietrantonio asked that the Budget discussion be first. The group agreed.

J. Barrett asked that the Executive Session be moved to the beginning of the meeting because there may be items discussed during Executive Session that would be relevant to the budget decisions.

MOTION: To move the Executive Session to before the Budget Discussions

By: J. Barrett

Seconded: M. Malcolm

Result: Motion failed (3 in favor– M. Emanuele, J. Barrett, M. Malcolm; 4 against – L. Pietrantonio, C. Trudon, J. Beausoleil, M. Kortmann)

B. Discussion and VOTE: FY2011 Budget

Dr. Bernard handed out the latest “Board Member Questions” document and reviewed those items. In addition she passed out the updated Special Education and Regular Education proposed cuts sheets and the updated Addition/Reduction Analysis Spreadsheet.

M. Malcolm asked if we had any sense to how far in the black the Food Service department is at this point. Dr. Bernard said she was unsure, but said Ms. Pratt noted she expected to still be in the black by the end of the year. M. Malcolm asked that it be a

part of the Fiscal report on a monthly basis. M. Kortmann agreed. Dr. Bernard also agreed and said they would come back with a “business model” financial reconciliation.

Regarding the budget, J. Barrett asked what questions have been asked that answers have not been received yet. Dr. Bernard said some have been asked that would not impact the bottom line and some would need to be negotiated with the bargaining units. She continued that there are some answers that are coming and need to be researched – again, nothing that would impact the bottom line.

M. Malcolm asked what happens if two weeks from today information comes to light about the budget. L. Pietrantonio said the budget needs to be submitted to the town and changes may come from the Town Council. M. Malcolm asked if an addendum could be made to the Town Council. L. Pietrantonio said if there was a drastic finding, we would make the Town Council aware. He said at this point, there is a timeline to be followed. C. Trudon explained that the Council can vote to increase or decrease the Board’s bottom line. L. Pietrantonio said you can, right up to the warning of the town meeting, ask for an adaptation of the budget either more or less based on any new information.

J. Barrett said the wrong information is being said about the due date of the Board’s budget to the Town. He said the Charter states the Board’s budget is due to the Town by March 12. He continued, it is a request of the Town Manager that the Board submit it earlier than that date. He said the Town Manager could be told that the Board is waiting for further information, such as responses from the Unions on possible concessions, and we could ask to delay giving our budget until the information is available.

M. Emanuele said the budget contains 3% increases for two subgroups of which we have not negotiated the contracts. She said she thinks we should reduce the percentages. She said if we go to negotiations with the 3% in the budget, the groups know that and won’t settle for less than that. She said she would like to see those two areas come down and the amounts given to another line item, such as textbooks. Dr. Bernard answered, that historically 3% has been the budgeted figure in these cases. She added if by some chance you save \$27,000 because you come in at 0% with those groups, that figure would assist with restoring some of the items that are on the cut sheet. M. Emanuele said those figures do not include insurance benefits’ costs.

M. Emanuele said, in addition, when she was looking at the budget figures for the nurses’ salaries she compared it to the top salary of the nurses’ contract. She said the salary in the contract is \$39,150 for 09-10. She continued, when you look at the schools’ figures, the budgeted amounts are from \$44,000 - \$47,000. She said this is far above the 3% that is supposed to be budgeted. She added that the itinerate nurse figures don’t match either. Ms. Baumgartner said she believes some could be summer school salaries. Dr. Bernard said Ms. Baumgartner would look into that in detail.

C. Trudon said most Board members who have spoken over the past few weeks would rather not layoff staff. She said if information was received in writing from the Union groups within the next week that would result in savings, it would not change the Board’s bottom line, but would save some of the cuts from happening that have been presented. L. Pietrantonio added the Unions are waiting to see what the bottom line is before they decide.

J. Barrett said he is concerned about the legal line and he thinks it will eat up more; he does not believe \$50,000 is enough. He also asked where the revenue resources are reflected in the budget. Dr. Bernard said there are grant revenue reports that come through Fiscal. J. Barrett asked about the nexus pass through money that is received on a yearly basis. M. Kortmann said that is the tuition money and the process has been explained in detail to the Board. J. Barrett said a reasonable estimate could be made and reflected in the budget. J. Barrett continued that when he looked up the Charter it said

the Board is supposed to be putting together a budget for expenditures and revenues. He said he wondered if the ARRA grant money and the regular grant monies should be included, because they all fall under expenditures and revenues. J. Beausoleil asked if he could read the section. J. Barrett read the section of the Charter, "The town manager shall compile preliminary estimates for the annual budget. The head of each department, office or agency of the town, including the board of education, shall, on or before March 12, file with the town manager on forms prescribed and provided by him a detailed estimate of the expenditures to be made by his department, office or agency and the revenue other than tax revenue, to be collected thereby in the ensuing fiscal year and such other information as may be required by the council or the town manager." J. Beausoleil said, that means the reports our Business Office provides to the Town Finance Office satisfy our requirements. J. Barrett said that would be reporting our information throughout the year, but not what we are supposed to be supplying for the upcoming budget. Dr. Bernard said we have no clear indication from the State of what that revenue will be. Dr. Bernard said there is "good revenue information" shared with the Town as they request and as is standard practice. She added that we are audited each year and that audit reveals what the revenue streams are yearly; we are using the same format for submission as prescribed by the Town. J. Beausoleil said if information was missing, it would have been noted by the Town Manager or the Town Council over the years. J. Barrett said he believes there is information missing in the budgeting process. He noted the ARRA funds as an example. M. Kortmann said the Town wanted the ARRA funds in the regular budget – not separated out. The group discussed the grants and how they are tracked and what information is given to whom and when.

MOTION: That the Board reflect all of these items that are in our Budget.

By: J. Barrett

There was no second.

M. Malcolm asked if the ARRA grant money and the Title I grant money are handled the same way, both being built in to the budget. M. Kortmann said there are multiple kinds. She explained the "big" ARRA money, that is off-setting part of the ECS debt, is built in the budget. She said there is other ARRA money, a smaller amount, which is supplemental money and mostly special education money; it is separate, just like Title I. Dr. Bernard said when you receive your monthly Fiscal reports you will see that supplemental money noted.

MOVED: To Approve the Board of Education FY2011 Budget at \$24,485,821

By: M. Kortmann Seconded: C. Trudon

Result: Motion passes (5 in favor– L. Pietrantonio, C. Trudon, J. Beausoleil, M. Kortmann, M. Malcolm; 2 against – J. Barrett, M. Emanuele)

J. Barrett said he already explained his opinion. M. Emanuele said, even knowing of all of the hard work that has gone into developing the budget, it does not serve the students and staff of Coventry well. She said because there are no labor concessions at this point, it is a lot to ask the property owners of the town to carry.

A. Discussion of February 25 Meeting with Roof Project Architect

L. Pietrantonio noted if there are any specific questions for the architect, that they be emailed ahead so they can be received by the architect for preparation.

XII. EXECUTIVE SESSION

Pursuant to CGS-1-200(c)(6)(A), the Board of Education will go into Executive Session for discussion related to Custodial Negotiations and Teacher Negotiations.

MOTION: Pursuant to CGS-1-200(c)(6)(A), the Board of Education will go into Executive Session for discussion related to Custodial Negotiations and Teacher Negotiations with the Superintendent at 8:27 p.m.
By: C. Trudon Seconded: J. Beausoleil
Result: Motion passes unanimously.

XIII. OPEN SESSION

The Board returned to Open Session at 9:15 p.m.

XIV. ADJOURNMENT

MOTION: To adjourn the Board meeting at 9:16 p.m.
By: C. Trudon Seconded: M. Kortmann
Result: Motion passes unanimously.

Respectfully submitted,

Kimberlee Michaud
Board Clerk

March 25, 2010
Approved